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CHURCH CONSTITUTION

OF THE

BOHEMIAN AND MORAVIAN BRETHREN.

The Original Latin,

WITH A

TRANSLATION, NOTES, AND INTRODUCTION

BY

B. SEIFFERTH,

BISHOP OF THE BRETHREN'S CHURCH.

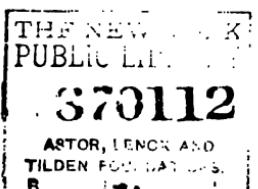
"Humaniter accipi, et benigne ab omnibus in quorum manus venerint hæc nostra cognosci petimus: et hinc potius quam ex adversariorum aut vulgi sermonibus, aut historicorum etiam quorundam et aliorum minime veracibus scriptis, de rebus nostris statuere."—*Proæmium ad Confessionem Fratrum Bohemorum*, A.D. 1535.

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INTRODUCTION.

// It is an interesting fact, that there existed in Bohemia and Moravia a reformed Christian Church, distinguished for the purity of its faith and worship, and for its scriptural constitution and discipline, in the century previous to the commencement of the Reformation, and sixty years before Luther began his work. It was formed among the more spiritually minded of the followers of Huss, after the subsidence of those intestine commotions which were consequent on the death of that faithful martyr of Christ. These men felt in conscience bound to withdraw from the Calixtines, who, with the exception of giving the cup to the laity in the Communion, retained the unscriptural dogmas and usages of the Papal church. Having obtained permission from Podiebrad, the Regent, they retired in the year 1457 to the Barony of Lititz, situated in the north-east of Bohemia. Here they were served in the word and sacraments by ministers who had seceded from the Calixtines or from the Papists. Their numbers were soon increased by the addition of persons from the neighbourhood and from other parts of the country, who were like-minded with themselves. At an early period of this association it assumed the name of "Unitas Fratrum," or Unity of the Brethren; rules were laid down for its regulation, and elders were chosen to pre-

side over it ; and, as congregations in connexion with it were formed in other places, synods, consisting of the elders, ministers, nobles, and representatives of the people, were held from time to time. And thus, before the adoption of that measure, which was to give them a distinct existence as a church, they had already declared their adherence to those doctrines of the Christian faith, which they maintained to the last, and had laid the foundation of that church constitution which is unfolded at large in the following Treatise.

It was in the year 1467, ten years after their secession from the Calixtines, and after they had in vain inquired for a church holding the faith in its purity, with which they could unite, that the resolution was solemnly taken by them in Synod assembled, to seek episcopal ordination from a congregation of the Waldenses at that time situated in the neighbouring country of Austria. For this purpose three of their number were deputed to visit the Waldenses, who welcomed them as brethren, and willingly acceded to their request.* The episcopal element, which was now introduced, led to a modification of their church constitution. The Bishops had seats in the governing Council (in which the senior Bishop always presided), while the office of ordaining to the different degrees of the ministry was of course dis-

* Camerarius, *Historica Narratio*, pp. 103, 104. Comenius, *Historia Fratrum Bohemorum*, § 61. Wengiersky, *Historia Ecclesiarum Slavonicarum*, lib. I. c. 8. Also Gindely's *Geschichte der Böhmisichen Brüder*, vol. i. p. 37.

charged solely by them. The whole organization presented a combination of presbyterian and episcopal government. The executive power was lodged in a Board, consisting of bishops and presbyters, while the ultimate authority lay in the Synods, which were statedly convened.*

That the system described in the account which we now republish must have been gradually developed, according as circumstances required, may naturally be supposed. Yet in all its main features it existed at an early period. Before the close of the fifteenth century it had assumed in its outline that definite form which is delineated in the "Ratio," although, in regard to the minor arrangements, alterations were subsequently introduced. Gindely, a Roman Catholic historian, fixes the period of this permanent settlement at A. D. 1496-1500.†

When the Brethren sent their several deputations to Luther, it was this that especially struck with astonish-

* Comenius remarks, with reference to the adaptability of the constitution of the Brethren's Church to different forms of political government: "It suits a monarchy, because it has a bishop; an aristocracy, because it has a senate; and a democracy, because it has a synod. Hence Calvin and Bucer, who both highly approved of the order of the Brethren, when invited to diverse places for the reformation of churches, so applied it severally as suited the political government. Calvin instituted presbytery in the republic of Geneva, and Bucer left the episcopate in the kingdom of England. Whether they acted rightly in thus separating the things which work better in union, is shown by the strifes which have thence arisen, and which have with so much injury been agitated among brethren."—*De Bono Unitatis*, § 8.

† *Geschichte der Böhmisichen Brüder*, von Anton Gindely, vol. i. p. 80.

ment the great Reformer. “These Brethren,” said he, “do not surpass us in purity of doctrine, but they far excel us in the regular discipline by which they blessedly govern their churches; and in this matter they have the greater praise, which it behoves us to yield to them for the glory of God, and for the sake of truth.”*

The outlines of this system may be found in those “Confessions of Faith,” which, on several occasions, the Brethren presented to their Rulers, or other men of authority, for the purpose of removing prejudices and warding off persecution. In the Confession addressed to King Wladislaw, A. D. 1504, and the two Letters in answer to the charges of a certain Doctor Augustine, in 1508, traces of their church regulations are met with.† But they are, of course, brought out with much more prominence in those documents which were intended for a friendly eye. When the Reformation began to shine on northern Germany, and some of the neighbouring lands, the Brethren found among the newly awakened minds, men who could sympathise with them in spiritual matters, and who felt an interest in becoming acquainted with the regulations as well as with the doctrine of their church. Their *Apologia*, which was presented in the year 1538 to the Protestant

* Lasitius, *De Ecclesiasticâ Disciplinâ, etc. Fratrum Bohemorum.*

† These documents seem to have been first printed in a folio volume entitled “*Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum.*” A.D. 1535, *Coloniæ.*

nobleman George, Margrave of Brandenburg, and which was afterwards published with a Preface by Luther, gives an account of all these matters in full accordance with that which is presented to us in the "Ratio." It may be taken for granted, that a system so complete, and which had been so long in operation, would at an early period be found described in written documents. And so, besides the references at less or greater length made to it in the "Confessions" of the Brethren, already adverted to, we have in the printed volume of the work by Lasitius, a minute account quite in correspondence with the one before us; and which was drawn up by him about the middle of the sixteenth century.*

Lasitius, a Polish noble, and a member of the Reformed Church, derived his knowledge of these matters from the Brethren themselves, some of whose written documents he was permitted to consult. In addition to this, we have the testimony of Wengiersky, in his "History of the Sclavonic Churches,"† that at the Synod of Cosminec, A. D. 1555, in Lesser Poland, which consisted of representatives of the Lutherans and Reformed, as well as of the Brethren, the latter laid before the Synod their Confession with the Apology and the "Ratio Ordinis et Disciplinæ Ecclesiasticæ,"

* De Ecclesiasticâ Disciplinâ Moribusque et Institutis Fratrum Bohemorum Memorabilia.

† Systema Historico-chronologicum operâ Adriani Regenvolscii. A.D. 1652, p. 77. The Author's name was Wengiersky, which is given in the 2nd edition.

that is, the “Account of their Church Order and Discipline.”

In the Preface to the “Ratio,” now reprinted, will be found a notice of the circumstances which gave occasion to its being laid before the States General of Bohemia. The object of the ruling power was, to unite the several religious communities, holding Protestant opinions, under one Board of general superintendence. It may be necessary here to explain, that the powerful Calixtine party, which was originally bitterly opposed to the Brethren, and had instigated or seconded the persecutions that were directed against them, had been happily influenced by the reformation in Saxony. Many of them renounced the Compactata or Articles agreed on at the Council of Basle, called themselves “Evangelicals” (the designation of the Lutherans), and in short adopted the Protestant faith. Stransky, one of themselves, informs us that this conduct was laid hold of by the Roman Catholics, who pleaded that they had thereby forfeited their claim to toleration; so that, in 1568, King Maximilian was induced to issue an edict against them. In 1575 Maximilian came to Prague, and held a Convention of the States General, when the leaders of the Reformed faith complained of the treatment to which they were subjected, and requested permission, in order that they might free themselves from the charge of heresy, to present to the King their Confession of Faith. This the King declined, alleging that there were several sects among the Pro-

testants, and he should like to see them join in one Confession. This was the occasion of bringing fully about that good understanding between the Calixtines and the Brethren, towards which some steps in advance had already been made. "They mutually recognized each other as brethren, and of the household of faith, and unitedly sought and obtained of the King, the publication and confirmation of the Confession they had recently drawn up. Peace and liberty were granted by the royal word to all who held to that Confession."^{*} The request for permission to constitute an ecclesiastical consistory, and to establish a college, the King put off to another time, giving, however, a solemn promise, that it should be attended to, either by himself or by his son Rudolph, whom he had already designated his successor.[†] Maximilian died the following year, and although Rudolph partook of the liberal spirit of his father,[‡] upwards of thirty years elapsed before the permission was granted. The cause of this delay is to be traced to the influence of the Romish party, and especially to the intrigues of the Jesuits, who even induced the King to renew the edict of Wladislaw against the Brethren as Picards; and subsequently, when he was about to make the required concessions to the other Protestants, led him

* *Respublica Bohemiæ, a M. Paulo Stransky descripta, c. 6. § 9.*

† *Comenii Historia, § 118.*

‡ Maximilian was wont to say that "those who attempt to rule men's consciences, seemed to him to invade the throne of God." *Comenii Historia Persecutionum, c. 39.*

to propose, that the Brethren should be excluded from the privilege.* This attempted injustice was, however, successfully resisted by the States-General, and on July 11th, 1609, Letters Patent were issued by the King, granting "the free exercise of their religion to "all who receive the sacrament in both kinds, that is, "the Evangelicals and those who adopt the Bohemian "Confession of faith, and conceding to them the Lower "Consistory† at Prague for superintendence of their "united churches, in conformity with their own "principles, and without any interference by the Arch- "bishop of Prague;" and moreover, restoring to them the direction of the University of Prague. The King declares that this decree shall be binding on all his successors, and that all former laws or edicts in opposition thereto shall be null and void.‡ The States, who were entrusted with authority to carry out the privileges thus conceded, at once set themselves to the task. In constituting the Consistory they resolved that it should consist of twelve members, of whom three should be ministers of the Calixtines, or Hussites, three of the Brethren, and the same number of the other Protestants, together with three professors of the University. To this Board was committed the general superintendence of the ecclesiastical affairs of the entire kingdom,

* Chronologische Geschichte Böhmens von Franz Pubitschka (a Romish priest). VI Theil, III Band, p. 338.

† So-called, because it was situated in the lower part of the city.

‡ The decree is given at length by the Jesuit Balbinus in his "Miscellanea Historica Regni Bohemiae," vol. i. p. 120.

exclusive of what pertained to the Romish Church.* One main object which they had in view was, to bring about unity of spirit and action among the different bodies whom they represented; uniformity, however apparently desirable, was not considered to be attainable, at least for the present. Meanwhile, the Brethren claimed permission to retain their own church discipline and government, and being required to give a precise account of it, the statement which is contained in the following Treatise was presented. This being accepted, the prayer of the Brethren was granted, and it was agreed that their senior Bishop should hold the next place to the Administrator, or President of the Consistory, so long as this diversity should continue.†

Such is the history of the little work now reprinted, containing an account of the ecclesiastical order and discipline of the Ancient Church of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren. It is difficult to conceive how any statement of this nature could be presented to us with a stronger guarantee for its authenticity and truthfulness.

With regard to the church system which is here unfolded, few thoughtful Christians, it is presumed, will withhold their admiration of it, whatever hesitation they may entertain as to the expediency of some of its

* Comenius, *Historia*, § 122.

† Ibid. The Articles drawn up for the direction of the Consistory are found in the "Reformation and Anti-reformation in Bohemia," vol. i. p. 197, &c.

parts, except under peculiar circumstances. There is evident throughout a simple adaptation to the arrangements of the early church, as they are discernible in the New Testament and in the post-apostolic period.* Experience proved that this system was well suited to the people amongst whom it was in operation, and to the state of things which then existed. It was greatly conducive to the end which all church rules and institutions should have in view—the promotion of holiness, the building up of believers in faith and charity and good works.†

* The character of the Brethren in a moral and religious point of view bore witness to its excellence. Even their enemies at times made this concession. One Lielensten, a Dominican, who wrote against

* With regard to *human institutions*, they openly avowed the principle on which they acted. "When we find them useful, or not hurtful, and not contrary to the word of God, we willingly conform to them; as sacred feasts and fasts, and other things of that kind; so that we may avoid giving offence, and study peace with all men."—Ad Doctorem Augustinum, A.D. 1508.

† Comenius relates, that in one of the principal cities of Germany he was in conversation with the head clergyman of the church, when the latter said, "that he had long wished to know whether a little book which he had once read, entitled 'Ratio Disciplinæ, &c.,' contained a true account of that church, or merely the idea how a church should be constituted?" I inquired why he doubted the fact? "Because," said he, "I cannot imagine that there now exists such a church in the world." I answered, that it was a history, not a fiction; that they were actual regulations. "Happy men," exclaimed he, "who had both the keys! We have lost one. Although stewards in the house of God, we are compelled to leave everything open, to lock nothing up, and so have to give what is holy unto dogs, and to cast pearls before swine."

them about the middle of the 16th century, after adducing various charges, ingenuously says : “ I grant “ that in regard to morals and life they are good, in “ speech truthful, and in brotherly love of one mind.”* A Romish writer of later date, the Jesuit Balbinus, remarks : “ Many of them had the sacred Scriptures off “ by heart, and all were wont to boast that they were well “ acquainted with their meaning.”† And the historian Pubitschka, a Romish priest, when endeavouring to account for the continued existence, and even increase of the Brethren, notwithstanding the edict of Wladislaw for their extirpation, ascribes it to the protection of some of the nobles, “ whom they had won over by their “ apparently innocent conduct, by the love of righteousness which they expressed, by their alleged innocence “ and true faith, which they grounded precisely on the “ Gospel.”‡

Camerarius, a learned Reformer, and an intimate friend of Melanthon’s, whose life he wrote, drew up a brief history of the Brethren about the year 1570, towards the conclusion of which he gives his estimate of their character. Among the rest, he says : “ Certainly “ they who will give their mind to the subject and “ confess the truth, will not be able to deny that the “ church of Christ among them (the Brethren) is main-

* Camerarii Historica Narratio, p. 98.

† Miscellanea Historia Regni Bohemiæ, Pragæ, 1679, vol. iv. p. 229.

‡ Franz Pubitschka’s Chronologische Geschichte Böhmens, VI Theil, IIter Band, p. 276. See also Usher “ De Christianorum Successione et Statu,” c. 6, § 15.

"tained, administered, and conducted not only in truth
"and reality, but also visibly, so that those who find
"fault with them scarcely seem able to avoid the
"suspicion of envy and calumny. . . . No
"ambition will be found among them, no aiming at
"superiority. There is no quarrelling or altercation,
"no malevolence, persecution, or strife against others.
. . . . There are no traces apparent of avarice,
"cupidity, lust. They make no gains either by usury
"or by taking advantage of another person. There is
"among all an entire and striking affection of sincere
"charity to all. There is no place for idleness and
"slothful inactivity. They render whatsoever services
"they can, and to whomsoever. They permit no
"discord to arise in their Union, but at once put it
"down. Injuries and violence inflicted on themselves
"they sustain with fortitude; nor are any indications
"of anger or indignation given by them, either in the
"way of resistance or self-vindication."*

In that remarkable era of the universal church's history, the Reformation, when the conviction of Gospel truth spread with unparalleled rapidity, and men of God eminent for their learning and intellectual power appeared in various countries, as though prepared and called forth for the crisis,—it was to be expected that the spectacle of a reformed church already in existence would speedily attract their attention. And such was

* Camerarii Hist. Narratio, p. 142.

the case. Not only the Reformers of Saxony, with Luther (already mentioned) at their head, but those of Switzerland came in contact with the Brethren, eagerly sought information regarding their church, and in one way or another expressed their opinions of it. Hence we have the testimonies of Luther and Melanthon, of Bucer, Calvin, Capito, Musculus, Beza, Peter Martyr, Peter Paul Vergerius, Ursinus, Chrytaeus and others, all concurring in the same judgment. Such a combination of testimonies, spontaneously rendered by the distinguished men of all parties is, of itself, sufficiently striking, and cannot but give a deep impression of interest and importance to the fact on which it bears. From these various testimonies we can do no more than select a few extracts.*

Luther writes to the Brethren in 1523: "Although you are aware that you are regarded as the worst of heretics, I bear witness that in the Gospel you are far before any that I am acquainted with. I know that by making this avowal I shall gain myself ill-will, but to that, thank God, I am now accustomed."†

The "Confessio" and "Apologia" of the Brethren were published at Wittemberg in 1532 under the eye of Luther, who wrote a commendatory Preface. In that Preface he says, among other things: "I have found

* These testimonies will be found at large in one or another of the following works: Camerarius, pp. 273-281. Lasitius, pp. 154-173. Comenius, *Historia, passim*. "Confessio Fidei" of the Brethren. Vitebergiae, A.D. 1573.

† Quoted by Lasitius (p. 156) from *Lutheri Opera*, Tom. ii.

"among them (the Brethren) one great wonder
 "(miraculum), almost unheard of in the Romish
 "Church, namely, that laying aside the doctrines of
 "men, they meditate according to their power day and
 "night in the law of God, and that they are skilled
 "and ready in the Scriptures, whereas the very Doctors
 "themselves among the Papists utterly neglect the
 "Scriptures while boasting of a title derived from
 "them." At a subsequent period he declared that,
 "since the times of the Apostles no Christians have
 "appeared, whose church has approached more nearly
 "to the apostolic doctrine and rites than that of the
 "Bohemian Brethren."*

Bucer, in his reply to Latomus, remarks : "That is
 "certainly the best method (viz. of church reform)
 "which is observed by the Brethren called Picards,
 "who alone of all Christendom have, with purity of
 "doctrine, also retained the discipline of Christ."†

Calvin, in a letter *ad Bohemum*, writes : "I heartily
 "congratulate your churches, on which the Lord hath
 "conferred so many excellent gifts in addition to purity
 "of doctrine. For it is no slight blessing that they
 "have such pastors to govern and direct them ; that
 "they are so distinguished for good morals and order ;
 "that they are formed on so excellent a plan, and are
 "furnished with so commendable a discipline, which
 "may be justly called the only bond for maintaining

* Comenius, *Historia*, § 82.

† P. 106 of Appendix to the edition of the "Ratio," A.D. 1653.

“obedience. We, to our grief, know its value by the “want of it, and strive for it in vain.”* Hieronymus Zanchius thus writes to his friend Crato:† “The “Brethren in their work of reformation seem to have “aimed, not as many do, to throw down and tear up “from their very foundation all that is found in the “Romish Church, but to construct their churches after “the true and apostolic, and therefore salutary rule of “piety, rejecting what is bad, correcting what is faulty, “and retaining that which is good: which is the true “and legitimate way of reforming churches. Would “that we had all done the same, after the example of “these worthy Brethren! We should then have “among us more piety, peace, harmony, and charity “(by which God is glorified and the kingdom of Christ “promoted), and we should discern more of these “excellencies in others.”‡ Lasitius, before mentioned, having made himself personally acquainted with the congregations of the Brethren in Bohemia, drew up an account of them, and sent it to Theodore Beza in the year 1570. In returning the MS. Beza writes: “There “are many things in your narrative which I greatly “admire. Would that there were any hopes of their “being introduced into our own churches! Some “things, however, seem to me not suitable for imitation,

* This letter was written while Calvin was residing in Strasburg. The quotation is from Comenius, *História*, § 80.

† Crato was physician to the Emperor Maximilian.

‡ Lasitius, *De Ecclesiastica Disciplina*, &c. p. 164.

"as being rather adapted to peculiar times and circumstances."*

Our object in giving the preceding details has been to prepare the reader for an intelligent perusal of the following work. We have explained its origin and purpose, and shown from the testimony of eminent and unbiassed contemporaries the nature and the operation of the system which it unfolds.

It now only remains for us to notice the subsequent history of this little work *as a printed book*, and to state the reasons which have induced the Editor to undertake the present edition.

We are informed by the original Preface that at the Synod held at Zerawich in Moravia, in 1616, this account was carefully revised, and being approved of by all the members of the Synod, was confirmed by the signature of the Seniors and Conseniors present from Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. Four years subsequent to this the fierce persecution of Ferdinand II. began, which effected the complete elimination of the Brethren's Church from the two former countries. Many refugees found an asylum in Poland, where a branch of the church already existed. By these a

* Appendix to Ratio Disciplinae, &c. A.D. 1633, p. 109. The testimony of Paul Vergerius, who had been Bishop of Capo d'Istria and Papal Legate in Germany, is very striking, but too long to allow of insertion here. It is found in his preface to the Brethren's Confession, printed at Zurich, A.D. 1556, and in his letters quoted by Comenius (Hist. § 95-97). He was on the point of entering the Brethren's Church when he was removed by death.

Synod was held at Lissa in 1632, in which it was resolved that a Latin translation of the “Ratio Disciplinæ, &c.” should be printed. This took place the following year at Lissa, with a preface in the name of the Seniors and Ministers of the Unity.

In the year 1660 the work was reprinted at Amsterdam by Comenius, the sole surviving Bishop of the Bohemo-Moravian branch. In order to render the subject more intelligible, he prefixed to it a brief history of the Brethren’s Church, and subjoined an address to the Church of England, which was then being re-established, on the excellence of the ecclesiastical order therein set forth, presenting it as a legacy from his own extinct Church. He also added “Annotations,” or notes to the work. A third edition, comprising also the other portions of Comenius’s volume, was published at Halle, in 1702, by Dr. Buddeus, who prefaced it with an interesting dissertation on the importance of church discipline, and the excellence of that of the Brethren, recommending the Lutherans, among whom the want of it was so greatly felt, seriously to consider if some parts of this system might not be advantageously adopted among themselves. With this view, he says, he had been induced to reprint a book which exhibits so clear an image of the holy discipline of the Bohemian Brethren, regarding it as a matter of duty, nay, of necessity at that time, to draw it forth from the obscurity in which it lay hidden.*

* P. 20 of Preface, “Diligenter ergo considereremus hanc pulcherrimæ Ecclesiæ imaginem,” &c.

The present Editor may repeat the concluding sentiment just quoted as expressing his motive for undertaking *this edition*. Upwards of a century and a half has elapsed since the former was given to the world. The book has become very scarce, and is so little known, that in an age when the subject of church regulation and government is one of much inquiry and discussion, even writers who have professed to treat on the Ancient Brethren seem to have been unacquainted with it. A reprint, therefore, seemed desirable. This is accompanied with a translation ; for these are not the days wherein the learned alone are to be addressed on such matters, nor is the value or interest of the work confined to them. It is believed that there are many thoughtful minds which may derive useful instruction from the study of a system that, under the Divine blessing, was attended in its practical working with such excellent results.

If we bear in mind also the spirit of Christian charity which ever distinguished the Brethren, the perusal of this account of their church constitution may teach us, that the most enlarged love for our fellow Christians is perfectly compatible with a decided predilection for that part of Christ's fold on earth, in which His Providence has placed us, and His grace has blessed us. It may lead us to consider whether the diversity that obtains among the different sections of Protestant Christendom be inconsistent with oneness of spirit and unity of action ; and if not, to look forward in our

prayers and our efforts to the time, when, notwithstanding the variety which will still exist in the different parts, all shall form one combined and beautiful whole. That the Brethren yearned for communion with kindred spirits, their entire history bears witness. From *Rome*, indeed, they stood aloof. They regarded her as an apostate church, the great realization of the predicted Antichrist, and they bore an unwavering testimony against her at the risk, and often at the cost, of all that man holds dear on earth.* But they looked eagerly around for fellow Christians who were guided by the word of truth. Hence, in the midst of that palpable darkness which overhung the world at the close of the 15th century, they once and again sent out their messengers, as Noah his dove, to ascertain the state of things, and see if a truly Christian people with whom they might unite could anywhere be found.† But the search was fruitless; and the Brethren saw that nothing remained for them but to raise their sighs to God on behalf of His people, and with constancy and patience endure their own trials.‡ Yet, at a Synod, held in the year 1486, they adopted the resolution, “that if God “should anywhere raise up pious teachers and refor-“mers of the church, they would join them.”|| Their

* Mr. Elliott considers the Bohemian Brethren as raising the last testimony against Rome previous to the death of the witnesses. *Horæ Apocalypticæ*.

† Camerarius, pp. 119, 120; Comenius, *Historia*, § 66.

‡ Comenius, *Hist.* § 68.

|| *Ibid.* § 67.

joy was great when the Reformation began in Germany. They watched its progress with intense interest. "This is that," said they, "which our fathers foretold, but saw not. To us, their descendants, and to many of Christ's faithful people, it is given to rejoice therein to the glory of God."* The Brethren soon entered into a cordial intercourse with Luther and the other Reformers, and were ready to profit by their advice as well as to impart counsel, the result of their own experience. That they did not come into closer union with the churches of the Reformation was owing to the fact, that the Brethren considered them materially defective in point of order and discipline.† Subsequently, when union with other bodies of Christians was practicable, as in Poland, and again, as we have seen, in Bohemia, in the reign of Rudolph II., they willingly associated with them, at the same time retaining their church constitution.‡ This catholic spirit of the

* The *Apologia*. See *Lydii Waldensia*, p. 280.

† The Brethren were jealous of any connexion which tended to relax their discipline. "And truly," says Jablonsky, "if we consider the constitution of the Bohemian Church and its transactions with Luther and other Reformers, it will be evident that the real cause why those good men were unwilling fully to unite and form one body either with those of the Augsburg or those of the Helvetic Confession was, that in these churches reformed from Popery, they thought there was too lax a discipline, and that more attention was given to science than to conscience and serious piety."—*Historia Consensus Sandomiriensis*, § 10. See also Lasitius, p. 214.

‡ This spirit was acknowledged and cordially responded to by the gentle Melancthon, whose letter addressed, A. D. 1535, to the Brethren, is well deserving of attention. It is given in Camerarius's volume, p. 277.

old Brethren's Church, breathes in the writings of its latest representatives. Comenius, in his "De Bono Unitatis," § 11, stating his reason for setting forth its history and order, remarks:—"I seek no advantage for my Church, which is now no more; nor for myself, who am just entering the tomb: but for thee, O Catholic Church, the common mother; whom I so love and reverence, that I should desire thy profit in whatever way. Aloof from all party spirit or strife, I was born, have lived, and die, adhering to Christ alone, along with those whom He had given to me as guides, or to whom He had given me in that capacity. O that all who call on the name of Christ were persuaded to be of the same mind, namely to take Christ and Christ alone as their Leader, ignoring other leaders whosoever they may be, and, while having solely in view salvation and eternal life, to dismiss all trifles, contentions about primacy, precedence, titles, revenues, as worldly rubbish, altogether out of place."

Dr. Jablonsky, who had been attacked in an anonymous writing on account of his advocacy of Christian union in his History of the Consensus of Sendomir, says in his reply, that as a youth he had been educated among the Bohemian Brethren, where honourable mention was made of Luther by pious men, many of them venerable for an honoured old age. They regretted that the good understanding with him had been broken off by his successors, and lamented the dissensions that subsisted. He remembered a remark in a book by one

of the Brethren, “ that the doctrine might be reconciled, if the doctors could ;” and he had heard one of their distinguished men declare :—“ If these two Confessions, the Augustan and the Bohemian, should meet in free air, they would join and embrace like affectionate sisters ; but here below on earth, where they lodge among men swayed by their prejudices and feelings, they are reluctantly compelled to engage in civil war.”*

With regard to the translation of the “ Ratio” here given, the Editor begs to state, that his aim has been to make it as *literal* as was consistent with the idiom of our language, being of opinion that in a document of this nature accuracy is the first requisite. The *Notes*, which are added with a view to give information on various points adverted to in the work itself, are partly selected from the “ Annotations” of Comenius, and partly derived from other sources.†

* Epistola Apologetica, p. 7.

† Köppen, Lutheran clergyman at Bienowitz, who published his German translation of the “ Ratio,” in 1844, closes his Preface to it with these words:—“ In conclusion, it need scarcely be remarked, that the “ Renewed Brethren’s Church still retains essentially this church order. “ Perhaps their choir arrangements are peculiar and new; but that “ which is specially so, is that Missionary activity so richly blessed by “ the Lord of the Church, by which she puts to shame far richer church “ communities.”

RATIO DISCIPLINÆ

ORDINISQUE ECCLESIASTICI

IN

UNITATE FRATRUM BOHEMORUM.

(UT TYPIS EXSCRIPTA FUIT LESNÆ, MDCXXXII.)



P R A E F A T I O.

CONSTAT ex historiis, pie lector, gentem Bohemam postquam Ioannis Hussi et Hieronymi Pragensis ministerio Evangelii luce feliciter fuisse collistrata, novis tamen Satanæ fraudibus ad apostaticæ sedis obedientiam, calice solo, cum aliis quibusdam paucis sibi reservatis, rursum pellectam fuisse; in Basiliensi nimirum Concilio, anno 1433, unica Taboriensium urbe accensum lumen sub modium recondi dolente, perque multos annos resistente, et doctrinæ puritatem, suamque in fide constantiam gladio defendantem: donec et ipsi partim dolo circumventi, partim vi oppressi fuerunt. Quicquid ergo piarum adhuc supererat Hussi reliquiarum, divino inflammati zelo denuo resumperunt animos, et a Calixtinis illis pseudo-Hussitis secessione facta, anno 1457, peculiares coetus multis in locis, sola divina ope fulti, feliciter erexerunt: quemadmodum et Consistorium peculiare. Paulo enim ante illa tempora, Waldensium e Gallia pulsorum pars in vicina Austria, cum uno et altero Episcopo suo, considerant: ad quos legatione facta nostri illi propositum totum detegunt, consiliumque tandem et Christianam coalitionem expetunt. Collaudant illi propositum, suadentque si cœtus illi puram amplectentium Evangelii doctrinam a dissipatione præservari debeant, videndum esse ne pastores fidi deficiant.

Non expectandum igitur, dum Romanæ ordinationis

aliqui veritatis amore ad illos transeant, seque illis pastores dent: sed ordinandos esse domi, pro necessitate. Cumque dicti Waldenses, legitimos se habere Episcopos, legitimamque et non interruptam, ab Apostolis usque, successionem affirmarent, crearunt tres e nostrorum ministris, ritu solemni, *Episcopos*, illisque ministros ordinandi contulerunt potestatem. Sed qui in odium tracto ab antichristiano abusu *Episcoporum* nomine *Seniorum* potius et *Antistitum* appellatione acquiescebant, uti et hactenus. Quantum ad coalitionem ipsam, antequam hæc in effectum deduci potuisse, dissipati sunt boni Waldenses denuo, primariusque ipsorum Episcopus, Stephanus, Viennæ igni exustus. Nostri illi in Bohemia multas, pariter experti persecutio[n]es, extirpari tamen, (Deo ipsos protegente) non potuerunt. Crevit potius fidelium numerus adeo, ut circiter annum 1500 prope ducentæ essent per Bohemiam et Moraviam Ecclesiæ, e nobilitate jam multis eas pie foventibus. Quanto autem sudore et sanguine fundamenta illa Orthodoxæ fraternitatis constiterint, historiæ quæ ad manum sunt, docent.

Quod *Fraternitatis* nomen attinet, id a re ipsa de sumptum fuit. Erant illi revera genuina sancti martyris Hussi propago: quia tamen Calixtini *Hussitarum* titulum præriperuerant, neque nostri illi contra Spiritus Sancti interdictum, 1 Cor. i. 12, 13, ab hominibus denominari sustinerent: factum est, ut se ipsos invicem amabili illo, et Christianis convenientissimo nomine, *Fratres et Sorores* adpellarent. Apologiis vero, et libris suis, fundamentum causæ M. Hussi ("legem

Christi sufficientem esse ad Ecclesiæ militantis regimen, sine additamentis legum humanarum") respectantes, et ne a fundamento hoc, vel ipsi vel posteri recederent, præcavere volentes, subscribebant *Fratres legis* (seu regulæ) *Christi*. Et quia ordinem inter se certum, ad servandam fidei et caritatis unanimitatem, exerant, appellabant totam congregationem suam *Unitatem Fratrum*, quemadmodum et hactenus.

Quia vero templa publica a Romanis, vel Pseudo-Hussitis, ubique occupabantur, illi peculiaria sibi oratoria oppidatim exstruere, pastoresque (ordinariis destituti redditibus) manuum labore victimum quærere necesse habuerunt.

Cum vero postea Germaniæ quoque misertus Deus magnum illum excitasset Lutherum, fratres ad ipsum (aliosque in imperio celebres Evangelii doctores) aliquoties legatione instituta, doctrinæ quidem harmoniam in præcipuis plerisque omnibus capitibus deprehenderunt, ordinis vero et disciplinæ strictioris laudem præ aliis reportarunt; quemadmodum Lutheri et aliorum, quæ extant ad fratres vel de fratribus epistolæ, testantur.

Quamvis autem peroptassent cum ceteris Ecclesiis, in Germania et alibi reformatis, plane unum fieri: quia tamen inter easdem dissidia oriri varia cernebant, a partium studiis abstinendum sibi, amicitia Christiana cum utrisque retenta, censuerunt: suorum interim coetuum curam (quod præsertim Disciplinam attinet) tanto sollicitius gerentes, quanto plus animadverterunt Disciplinæ neglectu, aut languore, contentiones illas potissimum invaluisse.

Postea vero, cum bello Schmalcaldico superati fuisse Protestantes in Germania, Ferdinandusque Bohemos etiam suos (utpote Protestantium foederatos) ad pœnam traheret, confiscatis nonnullorum procerum bonis, ecclesiæ Fratrum ex istis locis ejecit, Regnoque proscriptis, anno 1548. Qui terno agmine in majorem Poloniæ et Borussiam delati, ibi quoque Evangelii doctrinam sparserunt, Ecclesiæque nonnullas fundarunt.

Tandem cum anno 1609, Proceres Bohemi, impetrata a Rodolpho Imperatore religionis libertate, omnes Evangelicas diversorum rituum Ecclesiæ, ad Syncretismum redigere tentarent, jussi sunt Fratrum patroni et antistites exhibere: *Quidnam præ reliquis peculiare haberent, præsentim quod ad disciplinam et ordinem.* *Exhibuerunt itaque sequentem seriem:* quæ cum approbaretur, nec tamen Ecclesiæ ad eam formam redigi tum posse putarentur, indulsum est Fratribus (ad commune regni consistorium alioqui receptis) suam retinere disciplinæ ac ordinis formam, “donec perfectius aliquid, quod omnibus pariter inserviret, offerret Deus.”

Ut ne autem quid prætermineretur interim, quod ad constantem ordinis ejus boni observationem videretur facturum, certiusque præcaveretur elanguescentia, quæ vel sensim contingere (amota vigili in talibus providentia) solet: consignatio illa, et velut in tabulas redactio, in Synodo generali Zerawicci Moravororum (anno 1616), revisa, completa, totique ministerio ad relegendum, gnarviterque secundum omnia perpensandum, oblata fuit. Quod cum ageretur, comprobata ea fuit ab omnibus, præsentiumque e Bohemia, Moravia, Polonia Seniorum atque Conseniorum subscriptionibus confirmata:

non solum ut certior extaret rei hujus ad posteros memoria, sed ut arctior quoque evaderet singulorum, ad sedulam istorum per caritatem mutuam observationem, obligatio.

Ac quoniam nec deerant deinceps, qui eandem consignationem luci dari postularent, exterorumque piorum desideria in Ecclesiis nonnullis id deposcere intelligebantur: statutum fuit tandem in Synodo, quæ a dispersa fraternitate Lesnæ Polonorum celebrabatur anno 1632, ut typis excriberetur. Videbatur quidem istis temporibus jam alia quadam disciplinas concastigare Deus (procul dubio ob desitam internos quoque caritatem primam, remissumque fervorem pristinum, Apocal. ii. 4.) ; non tamen convenire judicatum est, ut negligentia quadam nostra in oblivionem abiret, et tenebris velut sepeliretur, quod semel sancta consideratione a majoribus constitutum, neque etiam sine profectu pietatis hactenus usurpatum erat. Cogitationes potius eo conferre decuit, ut reconcinetur, quod luxatum est, eviteturque totalis distortio, sanitas autem potius restauretur, Hebr. xii. 13. Quod ut internos, pariterque universos Christi fideles confiat, sua nos cœlesti gratia Deus, et renovare et confirmare dignetur, ob sacrosancti nominis sui gloriam, Amen.

SENIORES ET MINISTRI

Unitatis Fratrum.

ORDO ECCLESIASTICUS IN UNITATE FRATRUM BOHEMORUM.

NULLAM hominum societatem, regnum, civitatem, domum, imo nullam creatam rem citra ordinem certum consistere posse, sed illico labefactari, nutare, labi omnia, totius universi exemplis constat satis. Nec igitur Ecclesia, quæ “domus est Dei,” 1 Timot. iii. 15, et “civitas magni Regis,” Psalm xlviij. 2, et “regnum Dei,” Matth. xx. 1, nisi ordine certo constare potest. Hinc Apostolus: “Omnia decenter et secundum ordinem fiant,” 1 Cor. xiv. 40. Qui ordo etiamsi non in omnibus Ecclesiis unus idemque servari possit, certum tamen est, unamquamque particularem Ecclesiam, quo plus ordinis habet, eo firmius stare, eo jucundius florere. Atque hac consideratione moti primi Unitatis nostræ fundatores, cum se ab idololatris separassent, non id solum egerunt (quamvis primario) ut doctrinæ puritatem, et vitæ christianæ simplicitatem restituerent: sed etiam, ut ordinis vinculo utrumque illud in se, et se in utroque illo, firmarent. Disposuerunt igitur, Deo auxiliante, tum se ipsos ad sanctam illam societatem, tum res ad purum Dei cultum, Ecclesiæque ædificationem; spectantes, quam optime vel ad apostolicæ et primitivæ Ecclesiæ formam poterant, vel præsens tum in persecutionibus constitutæ Ecclesiæ

status permittebat. Quod enarraturi modo in septem tribuemus capita.

- I. Primo exhibebitur ordo totius Unitatis in genere.
 - II. Ordo Ministrorum et Synodorum.
 - III. Ordo Ministerii, seu modus Sacra ministrandi publice.
 - IV. Ordo Ministrorum domesticus: sive Vitæ privatæ Ministrorum ratio.
 - V. Ordo Auditorum privatus.
 - VI. Ordo Visitationum: sive inspectionis superiorum ad inferiores.
 - VII. Ordo Disciplinæ, qua veluti vinculo ista omnia continentur.
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CAP. I.

DE ORDINE TOTIUS UNITATIS IN GENERE.

ORDO Unitatis Fratrum in genere est tum *rerum*, ad sacram Dei cultum pertinentium, certa juxta Dei verbum distinctio; tum *personarum*, in congregacione ista unanimiter Deo servientium, discretio, certisque officiis erga se invicem connexio atque colligatio.

ORDO RERUM.

Cum fratres omnia viderent confusa, nec distinguere quemquam inter necessaria et non-necessaria, aut saltem inter magis et minus necessaria, et quod pejus erat, negligi a plerisque fundamentalia salutis, tractari superficialia: coeperunt rerum in Christianismo concurrentium

discrimen tradere, Jer. xv. 19, Ose. viii. 12, Matt. vii. 9, Gal. iv. 10.

Esse videlicet in Christianismo

quædam	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{Essentialia.} \\ \textit{Ministerialia.} \\ \textit{Accidentalia.} \end{array} \right.$
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Essentialia Christianismi vocarunt illa, in quibus hominum salus immediate sita est: nempe ex parte Dei, *gratia Dei Patris, meritum Christi, et Spiritus Sancti dona*: ex parte vero nostra *fides, caritas, et spes*. Per *fidem* intelligendo beneficiorum Dei agnitionem, et privatim sibi factam applicationem. Per *caritatem*, flagrans redamandi Deum et per omnia ei obsequendi, studium. Per *spem*, in utroque illo perseverandi, atque ita fidei finem assequendi, immotam fiduciam. Absque his neminem salvari posse docuerunt.

Ministerialia vero Christianismi esse divinitus Ecclesiæ data media, per quæ *gratia Dei Patris, meritum Christi, Spiritusque Sancti operatio*, nobis innotescunt et conferuntur: id est, per quae in nobis fides, caritas et spes accenduntur, foventur, roborantur. Nempe *Verbum Dei, Claves, et Sacra menta*. *Verbum* enim Dei essentialia illa nobis revelat, Psalm. xix. 7—11. *Claves* assignant, Joan. xx. 22. *Sacra menta* obsignant, Rom. iv. 11. Ideoque *ministerium Ecclesiæ* docent esse necessarium, non propter se sed propter illa essentialia. Nec aliud in ministerio et per illud quærendum, quam ut fides reddatur quam purissima; caritas quam flagrantissima; spes quam tenacissima, in vita et morte, omnibusque temptationibus misericordiæ Dei inhærens indissolubiliter.

Accidentalia vero Christianismi appellabant (quæ alii Adiaphora) ea, quæ tempus, locum, modumque ministerialia illa usurpandi concernunt, id est, *ceremonias ritusque religionis externos*. Quæ putarunt pro libertate et prudentia christiana ita esse usurpanda, ut non solum non officiant fidei, caritati, spei (ab illis nempe abducento, aut eas obscurando, quod utrumque Idololatricæ et superstitiones ceremoniæ faciunt,) sed magis ut illustrandis et inculcandis illis inserviant, Rom. xiv. per totum, 1 Cor. xiv. per totum, Col. ii. 16, et alibi.

Atque circa hæc potissimum versatur Unitatis nostræ ordo. *Essentialia* enim et *ministerialia* communia habemus cum universis Christianis, modo sua bona norint, et satis distincte intelligent, (Rom. x. 12, Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5, 6.) *In Accidentalibus* aliquid ab aliis forsan diversum, non tamen aliunde, quam e divina in Scripturis varie indigitata ordinatione, primitivæque Ecclesiæ exemplis, deductâ. Quæ qualia sint, et an satis fini suo respondeant, in conspectu Ecclesiæ (non salutis cardinem, sed meliorem, et ædificationi commodius inservientem ordinem, quod ipsa praxis nos docuit, in iis collocantes) explicamus. Neque enim tam pertinaciter ista tuemur, ut non (si utiliora offerantur) cedere simus parati, Philip. iii. 15, 16, et 1 Thessal. v. 21, sed neque ob leves causas quidquam mutare æquum putamus, 1 Cor. xi. 2. Unde est, ut nemini apud nos liceat, vel novos sensus aut opiniones introducere, vel insuetas ceremonias inchoare, libros scribere aut edere, nisi prævia examinatione, et communis omnium consensu.

ORDO PERSONARUM.

PRIMUM IN POPULO.

Personarum ordo est talis omnium discriminatio, ut unusquisque suo constitutus loco, cui præsit aut subsit, et qualem huic aut illi respectum aut curam debeat, exacte noverit: tam in *populo*, quam in *ministris*.

Populum, seu auditores suos, majores nostri (relichto naturali et politico regimine in vigore suo, nimirum ut mariti uxoribus, parentes liberis, heri famulitio, magistratus subditis præcessent) trifariam juxta gradus laborum, circa illos instituendos, partiri soliti sunt:

nempe in { *Incipientes,*
Proficientes; et
Perfectos, sive ad perfectionem
tendentes, vide Hebr. v. 13, 1 Cor. ii. 6, et Isid. lib. 2,
Eccles. cap. 21.

Incipientes, sive initiales, sunt, qui Catechesin et prima religionis elementa discunt: ut sunt pueri, pastorum jam curæ a parentibus traditi. Nec non adulti ab Idololatris accedentes, vel alias neglecti: qui, si *Ministrorum* inter Fratres curæ se permittunt, institui prius probarique solent, Hebr. v. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Proficientes sunt, qui religionis elementa jam edocti, in pastoralem curam suscepti, ad omnium in Ecclesia mysteriorum participationem admissi, magis magisque in agnitione voluntatis Dei, ejusque practica observatione, se exercent: atque sic in Ecclesiæ ordine se continentes, sanctificationem suam custodiunt, 2 Cor. vii. 1, Hebr. vi. i.

Perfectos appellarunt rerum divinarum cognitione

notabiliter auctos, inque fide, caritate et spe, adeo roboratos, ut alios jam quoque illuminare, illisque in ordine continendis præfici possent, Rom. xv. 14, 1 Cor. ii. 6, Phil. iii. 15.

Ex his enim eligi solent :

I. *Presbyteri, seu censores morum.*

II. *Eleemosynarum Curatores.*

III. *Ædiles.*

PRESBYTERI.

Sunt honesti, graves, pii, e toto coetu eo fine delecti viri, ut ceterorum omnium conservationi attendant. Quibus alios (in quibus exorbitantiae aliquid animadvertisit) commonendi, increpandi; dissidentes item reconciliandi; et quamcunque ataxian notaverint in ordinem redigendi (sive solis sive cum pastore, cui auxiliatores dati sunt) potestas datur.

Nec non in rebus externis, rem domesticam concorrentibus, juniores viri et adolescentes horum concilia exquirere, et ab ipsis fideliter instrui solent. Id quod exemplis et praxi antiquæ Ecclesiæ omnino fieri debere credimus. Videatur Exod. xviii. 21, 22, Deut. i. 13, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 4, 5, 1 Tim. v. 17.

Similiter e muliebri sexu honestæ, prudentes, graves matronæ, attendendum feminis eliguntur, similique potestate instruuntur. Vide Rom. xvi. 1, 2, 3, 5, 12. 1 Tim. v. 9, 10. Tit. ii. 3, 4.

ELEEMOSYNARII.

Eleemosynarii sunt viri prudentes, virtute ac fide conspicui, quibus gazophylacii (quo unusquisque auditorum quoties vult immittit aliquid, ne quod dextra facit sinistra sciat) Matth. vi. 3, cura committitur :

ut quoties opus nummos eximant, libris inscribant, et in pauperes (pastore tamen conscientio) erogent. Quantum enim fieri potest mendicitatem nostrorum præcavemus, mandato nimis Dei, Deut. xv. 7—11, Rom. xii. 8. Officii quoque ipsorum est orphanis, viduis, ægrotis, pro Evangelio exilibus, ne omni ope destituantur, providere.

ÆDILES.

Ædiles sunt viri honesti, quibus ædium sacrarum, et quas ministri inhabitant, cura committitur. Ideo et collectas, quater anno fieri solitas, ad se recipiunt, 2 Reg. xii. 10, 11, quantum quisque confert nominatim consignant, in ædificiorum reparationes aliosque templi usus, erogant: tandemque acceptorum et expensorum rationem semel anno Ecclesiæ reddunt. Ubi et ordinarie (cum operosius sit hoc munus) dimitti, aliquie ipsorum loco eligi, solent.

Hic est inter auditores Fratrum ordo: cui non inviti subjecti sunt ii omnes, utpote quem ex verbo Dei, et experientia propria, ædificationi accommodum esse sciunt. Nec se quisquam in ullam functionem ingerit, ut ob id contemni possit: sed quisque a coetu toto legitime electus, tam confidenter provinciam in se recipit, quam ad eum confidenter alii transferunt.

ORDO MINISTRORUM IN UNITATE FRATRUM.

Ministri Ecclesiæ nobis sunt *sacerdotes seu Ecclesiarum pastores*, pro Christo legatione fungentes ad populum, 2 Cor. v. 20. Quorum officium est, Verbum, Claves, et Sacraenta, administrare.

(A Sacerdotum appellatione Fratres non abhorrent, quatenus ea vox sacris dicatam personam denotat, non

sacrificum. Sed Bohemica vox, Knez, mollior est, populi præpositum sonans, sicuti et vicina Knize, principem secularem: quemadmodum nempe Hebraica Cohen, et sacerdotem et principem politicum sonat. Quia tamen Latina voce *sacerdos* alios offendit non ignorant, abstinent plerunque, et cum illis Ecclesiæ ministros appellant. Hic tamen, ubi ministrorum gradus recensentur, distincta appellatione opus est.)

Ab his sacerdotibus suis majores nostri, neque linguarum, neque philosophiæ cognitionem (præsertim cum id in Scholarum defectu esse non posset) requirere soliti sunt. Sed si quem enutritum verbis fidei, ad docendum aptum, sobrium, prudentem, et quæ præterea in ministro Ecclesiæ requirit Apostolicus canon, 1 Timothy iii. et Tit. i. viderunt, eo contenti pro vero Christi legato agnoscebant. Quod etiam D. Lutherus collaudavit, suadens nihilominus, ut quantum possent linguarum adjungerent studium: quemadmodum ex eo tempore, quantum potuit, fieri consuevit.

Isti habent sub se novellos, Ecclesiæ ministerio destinatos adjutores suos: supra se autem, ad ordinis custodiam, Episcopos seu Antistites suos. Quos sub se habent et fovent, sunt *Acoluthi* et *Diaconi*.

ACOLUTHI.

Acoluthi sunt adolescentuli a Pastoribus Ecclesiarum in domesticam societatem, eo fine ut in futurum Ecclesiæ usum litteris et moribus diligentius quam apud parentes, vel alibi instruantur, admissi. Sic etenim Samuel apud Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 1, Elisæus apud Eliam, 1 Reg. xix. 21, et turba filiorum Prophetarum

apud Seniores suos, 2 Reg. iv. 38, exerceri soliti sunt. Sic et Christus discipulos, antequam illis ministerium concredidisset, apud se fovit et exercitavit. Sic Paulus Timotheum, Titum, Lucam, pedissequos et comites habuit: unde et ἀκολουθία ipsis expresse tribuitur, Luc. i. 3, 1 Timoth. iv. 6, 2 Timoth. iii. 10, in Græco nimirum textu in evidentiam habet. Atque hinc est, quod jam inde ab Apostolicis temporibus gradus iste in Ecclesia usurpatus fuerit. De quo videatur Cyprian. lib. iii. Epist. xxiii. et Conciliorum canones.

DANT AUTEM ACOLUTHIS SUIS FRATRES HÆC OFFICIA.

1. Supra ceteram juventutem composite, modeste, pie sese gerendo, in obsequio et spontanea Deo et Ecclesiæ servitute alacritati, atque ita mansuetudini discipulis dignæ, adsuescere, 2 Tim. iii. 10, 14.

2. In Theologiæ rudimentis exerceri, legendo et memoriæ mandando Catechesin majorem, Evangelia, Epistolasque breviores ad Timotheum, Titum, Petri. Psalmos item et Hymnos spirituales, 2 Timoth. iii. 15.

3. Demandatur ipsis ad preces domi textus sacri prælectio: quandoque etiam ex eodem textu adeasdem preces exhortatio; idque tum ad experiendum, qualem Deus ad docendum in unoquoque aptitudinem deposuerit, tum ad acquirendam paulatim in Deo parrhesiam, qua suo tempore in Ecclesiæ conspectu opus erit, Luc. i. 4. Officii ipsorum est, ad concionem populum (sicubi non aliter provisum est) campanarum pulsu convocare, templum aperire et claudere, lumina (in antelucanis congregationibus) curare: atque ita inferioribus istis Ecclesiæ ministrare, 1 Sam. ii. 15.

4. Liberos Christianorum in scholis catechesin docere, Act. xviii. 25, 26.

5. Præpositos suos peregere abeuntes comitari; tum ministerii causa, tum vero ut ipsis honestæ ubique vitae testes sint, adeoque ipsi honestati ubique adsuecant, 2 Tim. iv. 11, et ii. 8.

6. Necessitatibus tempore demandatur ipsis quoque in minori Cœtu sacri textus, cum commentario aliquo, prælectio; vel etiam (si possunt) memoriter habenda conciunctula, precesque. Quod et ipsum pii auditores pie admittunt.

DIACONI.

Diconi sunt adultiores Acoluthi, futuro ministerio jam jam sese præparantes. Hos fratrum ministri pro administris, sive adjutoribus, habent, Apostolorum exemplo, Act. vi. 2, et Philipp. i. 1. Quamvis enim ab Apostolis primario ad mensarum ministeria ordinati erant; constat tamen et prædicasse ipsis, et baptizasse (ut Stephanus, Act. vi. 10, et Philippus, Act. viii. 5, 12, 35, 38.) et ad gradum superiorem, Ministerii nempe seu Presbyterii, promotos fuisse, 1 Tim. iii. 13. Itaque gradus hic Diaconatus in primitiva Ecclesia constanter fuit servatus: ut ex Conciliorum Canonibus patet. Quem proinde, etiamsi ab Antichristo cum ceteris in abusum tractus sit, ab Ecclesia eliminari non convenit.

ASSIGNANT VERO DIACONIS SUIS FRATRES OFFICII LOCO.

1. Constanter et fervide sacro-sanctæ Theologie studio incumbere, et digne ministerio sese præparare, 1 Timoth. iii. 13.

2. Pubem in Ecclesia et Schola religionis fundamenta docere.
3. In concionibus ad populum habendis exerceri.
4. Baptismum, quoties mandaverit Pastor, ministrare. Nam et Christus discipulis suis, antequam Claves Regni cœlorum commisisset, Baptismum permittebat, Joh. iv. 2. Sicut et Petrus discipulis suis, Act. x. 48. Apostolorum vero Diaconos Baptisma peregrisse, jam ostendimus.
5. Quoties frequentiori coetu sacra Coena administratur, nec sufficientes adsunt Ministri, adhibentur etiam Diaconi ad distribuendum, non solum calicem, sed et panem : ita tamen, ut non nisi Minister, clavium potestatem habens, absolutionem populo annuntiet et verba institutionis solemniter præmittat.

Atque isti sunt Ministrorum adjutores, Acoluthi et Diaconi. Præpositi Ministrorum, ceu vigiles et speculatores, sunt Episcopi et Coepiscopi, seu Seniores et Conseniores : qui junctim constituant Senatum Ecclesiasticum, sive ut alii loquuntur Consistorium Unitatis.

DE ANTISTITIBUS SEU SENIORIBUS.

Antistes, seu Episcopus, nobis est persona ætate ac donis Dei conspicua, ad ordinis in tota Unitate custodiam omnium ministrorum suffragiis electa, solenni ordinationis ritu confirmata, et sic auctoritate publica munita ; ut omnes reliqui, suo quiske loco, officium faciant, opusque Dei sine scandalis et confusione ubique procedat, attendens, Act. xx. 28, 1 Pet. v. 1. Concil. Carthag. 4. Tales Episcopi quatuor, quinque, sex (prout necessitas postulaverit) constitui ; et unicuique

sua Diœcesis, sive certus Ecclesiarum et Pastorum numerus, assignari solent, 2 Cor. x. 13, usque ad 16, Gal. ii. 9.

Dignitas vero eorum præ ceteris Ministris, non in honorum aut reddituum, sed laborum, et pro aliis curarum, prærogativa fundatur. “Qui major est inter vos sit tanquam minor, et qui præcedit tanquam ministrator,” inquit Christus, Matth. xxiii. 11, Marc. x. 44, Luc. xxii. 26. Et juxta Apostolorum canones, Presbyter et Episcopus unum idemque sunt : nisi quod Episcopus Inspectorem, sive Superintendentem, significat. Ideo que Episcopi Unitatis inter se quoque pari honore sunt : excepto quod unus eorum ordinis causa præsideat. Omnes hi electi et constituti semel, per vitæ dies in officio (nisi quis minus digne se gerat) relinquuntur.

COMMUNIA ANTISTITUTUM OFFICIA HÆC SUNT.

1. Sinceritati doctrinæ disciplinæque vigori, attendere per totam Unitatem : idque mandato Christi, qui servis suis potestatem dedit, et cuique opus suum, *Janitori vero præcepit, ut vigilet*, Marc. xiii. 34.

2. Providere ut bonæ indolis adolescentes in futurum Ecclesiæ usum diligenter exerceantur : quemadmodum Prophetæ filios, et Gamaliel secus pedes suos Paulum, erudiere, Act. xxii. 3.

3. Acoluthos, Diaconos, Ministros et Conseniores, ad gradus suos ordinare, Tit. i. 5.

4. Curam habere fidelem omnium Ministrorum, Diaconorum, Acoluthorum, Viduarum et Orphanorum, in sua Diœcesi.

5. Catalogos Ecclesiarum suæ Diceceseos habere,

earundem necessitates, auditoresque (saltem præcipuos) nosse.

6. Decernere Ecclesiis pastores idoneos, eosque pro necessitatibus ratione (non tamen insciis Coepiscopis) mutare.

7. Ecclesias suæ Diceceseos singulis annis visitare (de quo suo loco infra.)

8. Ministros et Pastores officium prætergredientes corripere. (Excommunicatio vero ministri non nisi toti Synodo competit: "Omnia secundum potestatem, quam dedit Dominus in ædificationem, non in destructionem," 2 Cor. xiii. 10.)

9. Si quid persecutionis aut periculi (sive toti Unitati, sive alicui Ecclesiæ, sive personis certis) immineat, attendere quomodo discrimini obviam iri, aut saltem periclitantibus solatii et confortationis aliquid submitti, possit, Act. xx. 27—31.

10. Tenetur quisque Antistes Unitatis Bibliothecam curare, librisque utilibus, quoad id fieri potest, augere.

11. Typographei Unitatis cura omnibus ex æquo incumbit: inspectio vero ejusdem proxime adhabitanti.

12. Et quia absolutum agendi arbitrium periculose uni aut paucis permittitur, tenetur quisque illorum, non solum collegarum, sed et Conseniorum judicio subesse, admonitionemque consilium et increpationem admittere. Inde si quidem, tanquam a legitimo judicio Dei, non est appellatio nisi ad Synodum generalem; a qua provocare non licet, nisi ad eum qui dijudicandi potestatem dedit Ecclesiæ.

OFFICIA PRÆSIDIS.

Unus inter Episcopos *Præsidis* fungitur officio cuius munia sunt,

1. Quoties opus censem senatum Ecclesiasticum conscribere; consciis tamen et consentientibus collegis.

2. Congregatis conventus causa indicata, et quam incertæ sint absque Dei ope mortalium cogitationes, commonefactione præmissa, ad preces inflammare, eoque subsequentes operas consecrare.

3. Inquirere num præcedentis Synodi, aut Conventus, decreta in effectum deducta sint. Tum proponere in hoc Conventu agenda: et ut quisque quod deliberandum putet proponat, rogare: consignante illico propositiones omnes Notario. Mox singuli sententias ex ordine (a junioribus facto initio) dicunt. Præses autem colligit, ponderat, et quo rationum momenta inclinant eo conclusionem dirigit: quæ a Notario decretis inscribitur.

4. Synodus item generalem, cum opus est, indicere; ad providendum de necessitatibus externis aliquos constitueret; inque Synodo totius boni ordinis primum esse ducem, *Præsidis* est.

NOTARIII UNITATIS OFFICIA.

E Senioribus uni Notariatus concredi solet. Cujus officia sunt,

1. Acta Synodalia in monumenta referre.

2. Unitatis acta et scripta optime cognita habere.

3. In scripta ab adversariis emissa attendere, atque si responso opus sit, et mandatum a Senatu fuerit, responsa conscribere, Senatusque censuræ submittere.

4. Si quem in Unitatis scriptis defectum animadvertisit, Senatum commonefacere, et pro unanimi deliberationis antegressæ statuto supplere.

5. Ne quid a quoquam in Unitate privato ausu edatur, attendere. Verbo, omnium editorum et edendorum librorum causas et rationes nosse.

CONSENIORUM OFFICIA.

Singulis Senioribus bini aut terni adduntur auxilii loco Conseniores : quos antiquitas Choropiscopos vocabant. Horum officia sunt :

1. Una cum Senioribus Senatum Ecclesiasticum, seu Consistorium, constituere.

2. Præ reliquis Ministris ordini bono ubique attendere : et quicquid correctione dignum usquam notaverint, præpositum suum commonefacere.

3. Ut leges, statuta, consuetudinesque laudabiles ab omnibus observentur ; omnibus verbo et exemplo præire, Phil. iv. 3, et 2 Tim. iv. 2.

4. De personis ad ministerii gradus idoneis providere, Tit. i. 5.

5. Ubi, qua in re, et quomodo, Ministrorum et Administrorum quis utiliter laborare possit, et quid proinde cuique committendum sit, decernere, Act. xvi. 4.

6. Disciplinam in Ministros, una cum Antistite suo, exercere.

7. Ecclesias cum eodem, vel absque illo cum jusserit, et quas jusserit, visitare.

8. Convocatos ad ordinandum Acoluthos, Diaconos, Ministros examinare, examinatosque certo cum testimonio Senioribus sistere. (1 Tim. iii. 10.)

9. In Pastores vicinos districtus sui (præsertim inspectioni suæ peculiariter commendatos) quomodo officium faciant attendere: ubi si quid levioris exorbitantiae notaverint, ipsorum est id corrigere: de gravioribus vero et scandalosis, Seniorem ipsum quantocius edocere, 1 Thess. v. 14.

10. Consiliorum arcana fideliter servare, Prov. xx. 19.

CAP. II.

DE SYNODIS, ET ORDINATIONUM RITU.

GRAVES ob causas (ad providendum nempe necessitatibus, sive totius Unitatis, sive alicujus Dioeceseos) Synodos celebrare solemus, vel *Generales* vel *Particulares*.

Generalis Synodus celebratur fere quovis triennii vel quadriennii spatio: ubi omnes Seniores et Conseniores, Pastores et Ministri, aut etiam Diaconi et Acoluthi, imo et Ecclesiarum Patroni (præsertim viciniores), comparent. Idque,

1. Renovandæ et confirmandæ fraternæ dilectionis et concordiae causa, 1 Cor. xvi. 14, 1 Petr. iv. 8.

2. Ad erigendum roborandumque omnium animos in opere Domini, Rom. i. 11, 12.

3. Ad redintegrandum ordinis et disciplinæ vigorem, si qua in parte laxatio forte deprehendatur, vel metuenda veniat, 1 Cor. i. 10, Eph. iv. 10.

4. Aliquando etiam, ut exterminentur e ministrorum numero scandalosi, aut rursum solenniter recipiantur pœnitentes.

5. Ad ordinandum Ministros, in quo gradu tum necessitas exigat.

Tales generales Synodi non uno certo in loco, sed in diversis, tam in Moravia quam in Bohemia cogebantur (Polonia quia dissita est, delegatos tantum ad Synodos mittebat : ut et ex Bohemia quandoque ad Polonorum synodos) hoc ordine,

1. Ad diem et locum destinatum comparent omnes vocati.

2. Divertit unusquisque in locum pro se destinatum : id enim mature provideri solet.

3. Sub vesperam ad datum Campanæ signum conveniunt omnes in templum, dicuntur Deo gratiæ, Senioresque paterne hospites salutant.

4. Cœnatur inde juxta mensarum et administrantium distributionem : idque (ut et sequentibus diebus) modeste cum timore Domini, piis et amicis colloquiis, Eph. iv. 29, et v. 4. E Conseniorum vero numero emittuntur ad coordinandum omnes ; ut et quotidie post ad visendum et salutandum accumbentes.

5. Sequente mane a Seniorum vel Conseniorum aliquo concio habetur, ut et aliis durante Synodo diebus : nec non pomeridianæ et vespertinæ preces, cum commonefactione semper e scripturis, de eo quod communi ædificationi, aut rerum præsenti statui serviat.

6. Ministri toto die congregati manent in templo (quemadmodum et Diaconi atque Acoluthi suo loco) in materia a Senioribus oblata, occupati.

7. Seniores quoque in consessu peculiari de ministrorum, Ecclesiarumve aut patronorum postulatis, aut quicquid in propositis est, deliberant et decernunt :

in grandioribus negotiis tamen non absque Ministrorum consensu.

8. Quoties vacantem in Senatu locum expleri necesse est, præmissis cum jejunio precibus, omnes singulique suffragiis personas certas designant, et obsignatis schedulis Senioribus tradunt.

9. Requiruntur et e Diaconis personæ Ministerii gradu dignæ: de quorum singulis Ministri, quicquid laudabile aut secus neverunt, consignant, et Senioribus transmittunt.

10. Testimonio laudabili ornati, examinantur a Senioribus et Consenioribus.

11. Fit ordinatio publice ad quemvis gradum: de quo infra.

12. Semper autem in generali Synodo Synaxis sacra celebratur, Act. xx. 7, ad redintegrandam nimirum mutuam dilectionem et in Deo lætitiam. Ubi quotquot adsunt Ministri Ecclesiæ, et Patroni, et populus fidelis, cum gaudio et exultatione communicant.

13. Sub Synodi finem adjunguntur variæ exhortationes, Act. xx. 25, Ex. gratia. “Ut omnia in hac Synodo gesta in Dei gloriam, suamque ædificationem quisque dirigat: ut quisque in vocatione sua, qua vocatus est, digne ambulet, bonoque exemplo omnibus quibus præest, præeat, ne qua parte blasphemetur ministerium.” Additis quandoque specialibus, a vitiis et scandalis his vel illis, dehortationibus, cum intermixtis comminationibus aut promissis divinis. Tandem cum benedictione et gratiarum actione, comprecationibusque (ut in posterum quoque halcyonia Ecclesiæ concedat Deus, opusque suum in gloriam suam

feliciter procedere faciat) in pace dimittitur Synodus. Cum admonitione, ut in via pie, modeste et concorditer, Gen. xlv. 24, se gerant omnes: domumque reversi Ecclesias et Patronos, domesticosque suos, Seniorum nomine salutent, eisque fidelem pastoralem paternamque curam, et coram Deo in precibus memoriam, perpetuamque saluti eorum inserviendi promptitudinem, renuncient, Rom. xvi. per totum, Heb. xiii. Ephes. i. 16, Phil. i. 3, 4, Colos. i. 3.

14. Acta Synodalia in futuram memoriam consignantur: quorum exemplar Seniorum quisque penes se retinet.

Particulares Synodi cogi solent, minore Seniorum et Ministrorum numero, ob necessitates subitaneas, quæ ad generalem Synodum dilationem non ferrent; ut etsi forsitan non totius Unitatis, sed alicujus districtus, aut certæ Ecclesiæ vel personæ negotium concernit. Cujusque tamen Synodi particularis acta illico absentibus Episcopis, sanctæ unanimitatis ergo, communicantur.

Sed quia in Synodis generalibus ministrorum ordinaciones fiunt, de his, quo ritu fiant, dicendum est.

Est autem ordinatio I. *Acoluthorum*,
II. *Diaconorum*,
III. *Ministrorum*,
IV. *Conseniorum*,
V. *Seniorum*.

I. ACOLUTHORUM ORDINATIO.

Pastorum quisque apud nos unum, duos, tres, pluresve bonorum parentum pueros, apud se alere, et in spem Ministerii educare, instituendumque curare,

tenetur. E quibus adultiores, ut Ministerii amore inardescant magis, ad Synodos assumuntur, ibique instituto examine (qui ulteriore cura et promotione digni videantur, et ut Ecclesiæ obstrictos se sentiant) primo vocationis gradu ornantur; ut nempe vocentur Acoluthi. Horum ordinatio talis est:

1. Habetur de materia apposita Concio: ut de *imitatione Christi*; de *vocatione septuaginta discipulorum*; de *filiis Prophetarum*, &c.
2. Provocantur nominatim ex ordine, et se in Ecclesiæ conspectum sistunt.
3. Interrogantur coram tota Synodo, num se Ecclesiæ usibus consecrare velint? num obsequia promittant?
4. Præleguntur ipsis officia: de quibus supra.
5. Horum observationem illi manu stipulata promittunt.
6. Priors Acoluthi dextræ porrectione in societatem eos cooptant.
7. Omnia votis, benedictione, et cantu sacro, concluduntur.

II. DIACONORUM ORDINATIO.

Diaconi ex Acoluthis adultioribus eliguntur, hoc modo:

1. Examinantur a Senioribus, num se totos jam Christo et Ecclesiæ dediderint, et quoisque in Theologie studio progressi sint, 1 Tim. iii. 10, Luc. ix. 62.
2. Vocantur nominatim coram tota Synodo: atque hic officia ipsis, ex 1 Tim. iii. 8, præleguntur.
3. Illi Christo et Ecclesiæ voto se obstringunt.
4. Preces pro ipsis fiunt, Ordinatorque manuum impositione eos confirmat, Act. vi. 6.

5. Offerunt novi Diaconi Senioribus et Ministris obedientiæ sanctæ, priores vero Diaconi illis societatis, dextram.

6. Benedictione actus clauditur.

III. MINISTEORUM ORDINATIO.

1. Cum in Synodo Ministri ordinandi sunt, Pastor quisque Diaconum, aut Diaconos suos, secum assumpturnus, indicat Ecclesiæ suæ, id est Presbyteris, seu morum censoribus : qui exaratis ad Synodum literis Diaconi sui (aut Diaconorum) vitæ et conversationis inque concionatorio munere profectui, testimonium perhibent, et num gradu Ministerii dignum existiment, explicant. Solent etiam testimonia publica honestæ progenerationis, ut omni ex parte inculpati sint, requiri.

2. In Synodo sequitur ordinandorum examen, idque triplex, 1 Tim. v. 22. Primo enim offeruntur ordinandorum nomina Ministrorum (in Templo congregatorum) censuræ. Ubi de unoquoque collecta testimonia, suffragiaque (pro illo vel contra illum) per delectos Notarios consignata, Senioribus remittuntur.

3. Secundum examen a Consenioribus peragitur : qui ternis aut quaternis simul admissis, singulorum in Theologia profectus, quam enutriti sint verbis fidei, 1 Tim. iv. 6, intentionis item ad serviendum Christo et Ecclesiæ, puritatem, 1 Tim. iii. 3, æstatem denique et judicii constantiam, 1 Tim. iii. 6, explorant.

4. Alegantur inde, qui digni videntur, ad conscientiæ examen, singuli ad Episcopos singulos: ubi majestate et gravitate muneric Pastoralis proposita, num con-

scientia pura, 1 Tim. iii. 9, absque omni lucri, honoris, et terreni emolumenti respectu, se Christo servos tradant, interrogantur. Morum, si quid in quo minus laudabile eatenus observatum fuit, correctio vividis exhortationibus suadetur, 2 Tim. ii. 14, Tit. i. 7, 8, Col. iii. 8; in spem denique divini auxilii variis consolationibus eriguntur, 1 Joan. iii. 21, Heb. iii. 1.

5. Postridie ad ordinationem venitur: præmisso tamen pridie ejus diei jejunio, solemnibusque pro necessitatibus Ecclesiæ supplicationibus, Act. xiii. 2, 3.

6. Convocata Synodo, et præmisso cantu, de officio pastorali concio habetur solemnis. Qua finita, prodit Ordinator,

1. Prælegitque sacrum aliquem textum.

2. Indicat toti congregationi personas quasdam ad S. S. Ministerii functionem vocandas et confirmandas esse: et converso ad ipsos candidatos sermone, ut vocati in conspectu Dei et Ecclesiæ obsequenter se sistant, admonet.

3. Mox Conseniorum unus prodit, ordinandorumque nomina e catalogo recenset, qui ex ordine se sistunt.

4. Quærerit Ordinator, utrum animum promptum ad ministrandum Christo Ecclesiæque adferant.

5. Annuentibus illis modeste, præleguntur e Canone Apostolico ad ritum hunc consecrandi facientia quædam: ut Apostolicis vestigiis insisti videntes, eo firmius de cœlesti vocatione persuasi reddantur, 1 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

6. Pergit Ordinator inquirere, utrum tam sublimi munere digni sint, ne per ipsos opprobrii aut dedecoris aliquid contrahat Ecclesia, 1 Tim. iii. 7. Et tunc pro-

deunt e Consenioribus duo, atque coram tota congregatiōne honeste progenitos, sana doctrina imbutos, vitæque inculpatæ esse, dignosque quibus Evangelistarum munus committatur, contestantur.

7. Jubentur (flexis genibus) pastorum principem Jesum Christum invocare: moxque totus pariter cœtus procumbens pro iisdem orat.

8. Officia muneris pastoralis præleguntur.

9. Illi se fidelitatis juramento Deo et Ecclesiæ obstringunt perseveraturos intra hos limites usque ad finem.

10. Confirmantur manuum episcopalium (quotquot adfuerint) impositione, cum invocatione super iis nominis Christi, ut eos in censem servorum fidelium cooptare, donisque Spiritus sui implere dignetur. Consenioribus interim, ministris totoque populo, simul in genua procubentibus, et "Veni Sancte Spiritus," etc. décantantibus.

11. Exhortationes novis Ministris ad labores, et in adversitatibus (quibus non carituri sint) patientiam, fiunt, cum pollicitationibus æterni, post labores fideliter exantlatos, præmii, 2 Tim. ii. 3, Dan. xii. 3, 1 Petr. v. 4. Ad quod illi alacres, Senioribus et Consenioribus obedientiæ, Ministris vero societatis dextram (nec non Diaconi observantiæ causa illis) offerunt, Gal. ii. 9, 1 Petr. v. 5. (Ecclesia interim, e centesimo trigésimo tertio Psalmo compositum hymnum decantante.)

12. Actus tandem ille synaxi sacra omnium cum exultatione terminari solet.

DE INAUGURATIONE MINISTRORUM.

Ordinati apud nos Ministri non involant in sacrorum

administrationem, ubi et quando vellent; sed visitationes mox a synodo per eas ecclesias, quæ novellos ministros habent instituuntur. *Ubi visitator,*

1. Curam principis Pastorum Christi de Ecclesia deprædicat, et ad gratam beneficij agnitionem exhortatur.

2. Docet N. N. legitime electum, vocatum, ordinatum esse, ut non seipsum ingessisse, Jer. xvii. 16, sed vocatum accedere appareat: Populusque fidelis eos, ut operarios, quos Dominus emittit in messem suam, Matt. ix. 38, agnoscat.

3. Indicat sacri muneric primitias, in plenaria clavium Christi et sacræ cœnæ administratione, jam editurum; prodireque et alloqui Ecclesiam jubet.

4. Minister ille, postquam vocationem divinam humiliter se sequi confessus fuerit, precibusque Ecclesiæ se commendarit, Ephes. vi. 19, 20, in genua procumbit: ut et (visitatore monente) cœtus omnis, precesque pro illo fiunt.

5. Erectis ad fiduciam de precibus exauditis omnibus, visitator Ministrum manu prehensum altari (seu ad mensam Domini) admovet, Librum ei Ritualem offert, administrationemque clavium Christi et sacramentorum auspicari jubet: inspectante, et plerumque illacrymante populo. (Hi enim ritus non necessitatis opinione, sed ad adumbrandam quomodocunque Ministerii dignitatem, excitandamque ad hanc Christi œconomiam reverentiam, retinentur.)

6. Peracta a Ministro novo Synaxi, visitator ei et toti Ecclesiæ, benedictionis denuntiatione actum concludit.

Neque tamen Ministris novis Ecclesiæ alicujus regi-

men totale committi solet illico, sed relinquuntur unius et alterius anni spatio Pastoribus pro Collegis, donec ad conscientiarum regimen confirmatores evadant, ususque alicujus Ecclesiæ eorum operam poscat. Quod si aliquis interea ad matrimonium honeste ineundum animum applicet, id quoque non nisi de Seniorum consilio et consensu fieri solet.

DE RITU MINISTROS ECCLESIIS IN PASTORES PRÆFICIENDI.

Cum tempus est aliquem Ecclesiæ Pastorem præficiendi (quemadmodum et cum pastores pro re nata mutantur), fit istud hoc modo :

1. Nullus Magistratus apud nos, nec Ecclesia, Pastores sibi quærunt aut vocant (quemadmodum nec Ministri parochias aucupantur) sed quo quis destinatur, eo se confert, Ecclesiaque illa eum Pastorem suum agnoscit. Quia nimirum Seniorum hæc cura est, quali rectore Ecclesia quæque indigeat, et ubi Minister quisque opus Domini utiliter peragere possit providere.

2. Quotiescumque igitur novus Pastor Ecclesiæ præsentatur, peracta per eum concione visitator prodit, et maturo Seniorum consilio illum Ecclesiæ huic pastorem dari docet, suscipi eum ut Jesu Christi servum suadens, Phil. ii. 29. Ministrum item ad faciendum strenue officium vigilandumque super hunc concreditum fibi gregem Domini, hortatur. Fit utrinque protestatio, Pastoris ad populum, et populi (per unum e Presbyteris) ad Pastorem ; hic curam pastoralem promittit, illi ut Jesu Christi Ministro obsequium, Hebr. xiii. 17. Quod et stipulata presbyterorum manu, in conspectu et nomine totius populi, firmatur : precibusque

et benedictionis divinæ utrimque voto omnia illa obsig-
nantur.

3. Cœtu sacro dimisso, decessor successori Auditorum catalogum, sacramque et œconomicam ejus loci supellectilem, in visitatoris et presbyterorum præsentia tradit; nec non de bonis externis, si quid dividendum est, amice inter eos transigitur.

QUIBUS IN REBUS MINISTRI SENIORUM SUORUM
CNSILIA EXQUIRERE TENEANTUR.

Ecclesiæ præfecto pastori cuique potestas est in gregem sibi commissum, omnium quæ pastoralis cura re-
quirit: excepto quod,

1. In magis arduis, casibusque minus usitatis (qui circa conscientiarum regimen occupatis nonnunquam ob-
veniunt) nihil inconsulto Seniore agere jubentur: tum ne sibi solis fidere consuescant, tum ut ad ædificandum validius sit, quod plurium consensu agitur.

2. Extra etiam casus ejusmodi, tenetur quisque pastor Seniorem suum de statu suo, Ecclesiæque suæ, subinde certiorem facere (ad minimum intra semestre) sive coram, sive per litteras: quo nimirum is inspectoris officio (quid ubivis fiat non ignarus) rectius fungi possit.

3. Magistratuum aut Ministrorum aliquo vita functo, Senior quoque commonefieri solet, ut ejusdem jussu plures Ministri cum Conseniorum aliquo, honestatis ergo, ad funus convocari possint.

4. Et quia visitationes (de quibus infra) æstate plerumque instituuntur, solet pastorum quisque ante Pascha, Pentecosten, et in autumno, a Seniore suo sciscitari ipsene

sacram synaxin celebrare, an visitatorum præsentiam expectare debeat.

IV. CONSENIORUM ORDINATIO.

Quoties Ecclesiæ senatum redintegrari necessitas postulat, eliguntur e ministris, quotquot opus, rerum præceteris gnari, pii, exemplaresque viri; idque per Ministrorum et Conseniorum suffragia. Quorum quisque ut hunc aut illum oneri parem existimat, ita consignatum (obsignata schedula) Senioribus tradit, vel si absens est, mittit. Illi resignatis schedulis, quos forte postulari vident, eos die sequenti (præmissa de munericis hujus fine, aliisve necessariis, e Scripturis admonitione) ad Conseniorum numerum ritu tali confirmant:

Evocati nominatim singuli in synodi conspectu se sistunt: an Deo et Ecclesiæ ubiorem offerant et prominent operam interrogantur. Annuentibus, præleguntur officia futuri munericis. Tum pro iis totius Ecclesiæ preces fiunt, manusque eis imponuntur. Mox illi Senioribus obsequii, Consenioribus autem societatis dextram offerunt, ut et Ministri cæteri ad contestandam obedientiam, ipsis. Tandem benedictionis divinæ preicatione coetus solvitur.

V. ANTISTITUTUM ORDINATIO.

Seniorum aliquo demortuo quantocius synodus cogitur generalis: aut, si hæc nuper adeo fuit habita, particularis. Conseniores autem congregantur omnes, et ministrorum pars, reliquis suffragia mittentibus. Ibi vero,

1. Preces cum jejunio, unius diei præmittuntur: ut

Deus rupturam explere, et quem elegerit ostendere, dignetur, Amos. ix. 11, Act. i. 24.

2. Concione peculiari imago Episcopiboni e Scripturis proponitur, et ut omnes tales e medio sui circumspiciant (posthabito alio quoctunque respectu) admonentur.

3. Concione dimissa, consignat suum quisque votum, tam Ministri, quam Conseniores et Seniores (non collatis tamen, nec communicatis sententiis, sed unicuique dictante conscientia) obsignataque conferunt in unum.

4. Schedulas soli Seniores privatim resignant, et quem plurimorum votis peti vident, eum a Deo monstrari firmiter credunt: nec tamen cuiquam revelant.

5. Sequentem demum die, congregato iterum cœtu, et invocata Spiritus Sancti gratia, Ordinator in conspectum progressus, exauditas esse preces, Deumque quomodo expleri vellet lacunam Ecclesiæ, jam ostendisse, nuntiat.

6. Intentis omnibus, et quis ille futurus sit expectantibus, admonet Ordinator, ut quicunque fuerit nominatus, Deo vocanti obsequium ne deneget, sed confidenter in Dei et Ecclesiæ conspectum se sistat. Moxque Episcoporum alter prodiens, nomine tenus ipsum evocat.

7. Vocatus igitur, sistit se, interrogaturque: "an vocationem hanc ut vere vocationem Dei agnoscat, et admittat? an Deo et Ecclesiæ operam suam promte lubentique animo offerat?" Esa. vi. 8.

8. Cum annuit, præleguntur officia, ex Apostolico Canone.

9. Tum ille clara voce Deo et Ecclesiæ se obligat, fideliter sincere constanter, facturum officium.

10. Procidit totus cœtus in genua, Deumque ut ratum habeat in cœlis, quod nomine suo fit in terris, donaque servo suo adaugeat, et ad tantum curarum onus Spiritu sapientiæ et roboris impleat, orant.

11. Mox (cœtu adhuc procumbente, et “Veni Sancte Spiritus,” decantante) Episcopi manuum impositione, et nominis divini invocatione, eum confirmant.

12. Ita ordinatione peracta Episcopi præsentes Co-Episcopum jam suum dextræ societatis oblatione amplexuque mutuo in conspectu totius Ecclesiæ, sibi coopertant: Conseniores vero et Ministri (absentium quoque nomine) stipulata obsequia promittunt.

13. Tandem hymno sacro cum gaudio et exultatione cœtus solvitur.

CAP. III.

DE ORDINE MINISTERII, SIVE SACRA PUBLICE MINISTRANDI FORMA.

PROPONETUR HIC USITATA NOBIS **FORMA**,

- I. Verbum Dei prædicandi.
- II. Baptismum ministrandi.
- III. Ad curam Pastoralem novitos recipiendi.
- IV. Sacram Synaxin celebrandi.
- V. Conjuges novos copulandi.
- VI. Mortuos funerandi.
- VII. Consuetudines denique nostræ circa dies festos, jejunia, elemosynas.

I. ORDO CIRCA VERBI DIVINI PRÆDICTIONEM.

Quia verbum Dei præcipuam ministerii partem esse constat, cui sacramenta velut sigilla solum annexa sunt, Mar. xvi. 15, 1 Cor. i. 17, Rom. iv. 11, præcipua quoque Ministris Unitatis ejus docendi cura est, non diebus solum Dominicis, anniversariisque festivitatibus, sed et diebus profestis, et quoties occasione funerum, connubiorum, vel alias, datur.

Diebus Dominicis (ut qui divino cultui toti destinantur) quater populus ad verbum Dei audiendum coit, bis ante bis post meridiem. In prima concione expllicantur delecti *textus Propheticci*; in secunda (quam magnam vocamus) *Evangelici*; in pomeridiana Apostolici; vespertina *Biblia sacra* ex ordine præleguntur cum adjunctis doctrinarum observationibus. Æstivo etiam tempore (a Paschate facto initio) additur quinta concio meridiana: ubi juventus congregatur, eorumque in gratiam *catechetica doctrina* popularissime pertractatur cum adjuncto singulorum examine. Comparent tamen parentes quoque, et alii; tum ut cibo refecti Deum collaudent, tum ut liberorum et famulitii sui institutioni intersint.

Forma vero sacros cœtus agendi hæc est. Congregato populo decantatur hymnus, vel cantilena sacra, (in concione magna et pomeridiana etiam Psalmus); tum concionator e suggestu (præmissa seu oratione cum populo, seu voto solum) textum prælegit et explicat; respectu semper ad locum communem ejus hebdomadæ habito. Omnia enim religionis capita ita sunt ad explicandum per dies dominicos disposita, ut

absolvantur annuatim: quemadmodum editus ejusmodi locorum communium, textuumque illis explicandis servientium, cantionumque sacrarum, index ostendit. Qui nimirum unanimitati ea ratione per omnes Ecclesias servandæ concinnatus est, non autem ut legis instar sit, a qua recedere non liceat: liberum enim est pastori fideli, quoties necessitatem videt, sive textum sacrum loco, tempori, personis et occasionibus accommodatiorem, sibi seligere; sive ex ordinariis textibus prudenter, ad quasvis doctrinas, dehortationes, consolationes, digredi. Hoc potius legis instar est, ut concionum prolixitas vitetur, ad evitandum in auditoribus fastidium. Ideo matutina concio non ultra horam, etiam cantu annumerato; quemadmodum et pomeridiana, profestique diei concio, protendi jubetur. In magna, Evangelico textui explicando hora datur: meridiana et vespertina, non ultra horam medium. Tandem vero concioni cuique sub jungitur clausulæ loco oratio, benedictio, cantus.

Concione meridiana et pomeridiana finita, remanent adolescentes et puellæ adultiores, examinanturque a concionatore (auxiliantibus ibi quidem e Presbyteris aliquo, hic autem matronis) quam attentos se ea die in audiendo verbo Dei præbuerint, quantumque obseraverit quisque. Per tempora vero Quadragesimæ, feria quarta et sexta, vespertini quoque cœtus coguntur, *salve* (a cantu, *salva nos Jesu rex cœli*) dicti, ubi mysterium redemptionis diligentius inculcatur, juventuti potissimum.

Forma autem verbum Dei prædicandi recepta nobis est simplex, absque humanæ eloquentiæ coloribus, phrasibus Scripturæ potissimum, *ad conservandam doc-*

trinam sanam et irreprehensibilem, ut sistatur in Christo Jesu omnis homo in iis quæ ad justitiam perfectus, et ad omne opus bonum instructus, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 1 Pet. iv. 11, Tit. i. 9, et ii. 7, Col. i. 28, 2 Tim. iii. 17. Hinc majores nostri distincte habebant conciones, alias pro incipientibus, alias pro proficientibus, alias pro perfectis : alias item pro cœlibibus, alias pro conjugibus seorsim. Quod fructu non caruisse, facile patet.

II. BAPTISMATIS FORMA.

Baptismum ad exemplum primæ Ecclesiæ ministramus.

1. Fidelium liberi, aliquot post nativitatem diebus, per baptismum Christo et Ecclesiæ implantandi offeruntur, Gen. xvii. Marc. x. 13, 14.

2. Prælegitur sacer textus : quandoquidem per verbum Dei et orationem sanctificantur omnia, 1 Tim. iv. 5, in primis sacramenta.

3. Fœdus gratiæ ad fidelium semen quoque se extenderet, demonstratur, Gen. xvii. 19, Act. ii. 39.

4. Eidem fœderi publica fidei professione subscribunt parentes et susceptores, infantis quoque sui nomine, Act. viii. 37.

5. Parentes, a Ministro interrogati, suscipiunt advocates testes pro compatribus et commatribus, jus eis conferentes, prolis suæ in fide et religione christiana, totoque fœderis cum Deo initi negotio, instituendæ : adeoque sui quoque, si negligentiores in officio liberos instituendi fuerint deprehensi, admonendi et increpandi. Vicissim vero susceptores illis promptitudinem ad eam rem pollicentur, et facturos se circa baptizandum (præ-

sertim si parentes decidere contingat) gnaviter officium, sese obligant.

6. Tum ad Deum patrem conversi omnes, puero nativæ labis per sanguinem Christi emundationem, per Spiritum Sanctum regenerationem, per baptismum internæ hujus gratiæ obsignationem, et ad sortem electorum cooptationem, exorant.

7. Prece finita, Minister nomine puero indito, (ex parentum voluntate) baptizat illum ex Christi præscripto *in nomen Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti*, aqua simplici et pura.

8. Tandem exhortatio fit ad parentes et susceptores, ut obligationis suæ memores, puerum tam diu et diligenter informent, donec pie educatum, et dextre institutum, in conspectu Ecclesiæ cum laude sistere, et pastorali Ministrorum curæ commendare, possint. Voto denique divinæ benedictionis actus clauditur.

III. FORMA NOVITIOS RECIPIENDI.

Pastoralis Ministrorum apud nos cura ad eos solum se extendit, qui bona voluntate Unitati ejusque ordini se submittunt; pastorumque curæ sese commendant: idque ad Apostoli præscriptum: "pascite gregem Dei, qui in vobis est," 1 Petr. v. 2. Ut igitur Ministri qui sibi proprie sint commissi scire, majorique parrhesia et fide circa eos, qui se ipsos fidei eorum commendarunt, versari possint, utiliter reintroductus est, jam a primæva Ecclesia usurpatus, novitios recipiendi ritus. Apostoli siquidem eos recipiebant solum, "qui semet ipsos dabant primum Domino, deinde illis, per voluntatem Dei," 2 Cor. viii. 5. Ritus vero apud nos adhibentur,

alii quidem in recipiendis adultis aliunde venientibus, alii vero in recipiendis domi natis, baptizatis, et ad religionem christianam sic satis institutis.

Adultos interrogamus : “Cur nobis se applicare desiderent ? an quod de doctrinæ veritate, ordinisque et disciplinæ utilitate, omnino persuasi sint ?” Si deprehendimus doctrinæ nostræ et disciplinæ gnarum, salutis fundamenta recte callentem, vita inculpatum, recipitur illico. Sin, differtur : ut tam ille nos sibi reddat perspectiores, quam nos ipsum nobis, 1 Joan. iv. 1, Rom. xii. 2. Recipiuntur vero tales non publice (nisi graves subsint causæ) sed privatim, coram presbyterio. Interroganturque adhuc,

1. *An promittant Deo in hac Ecclesia obsequium ?* faciendo nempe omnem voluntatem Dei, vi foederis gratiae.

2. *An Ministris etiam Ecclesiæ, Christi loco, obedientiam præstare sint parati ?* relictâ illis nimirum plena potestate sui docendi, monendi, increpandi, castigandi ? præsertim in scandalosis, si contingant, excessibus.

3. *An composuerint animum ad subeundas ignominias, persecutio[n]esque, pro Christo et veritate ejus ?* quoniam “omnes in Christo Jesu pie vivere volentes, persecutio[n]es pati necesse sit,” Act. xiv. 22, 2 Tim. iii. 12.

4. Tum admonentur, *ut agnitiæ veritati ad mortem usque adhæreant constanter*, Apoc. ii. 10, Phil. iii. 16, manuque stipulata ad obsequium (non Ministro ut homini, sed Christo ejusque verbo). Receptis potestas fit sacrae cum aliis fidelibus communionis, et ut in omnibus conscientiæ necessitatibus ad pastores suos confidenter configuant.

Juniores autem, religionis capita domi a parentibus et susceptoribus vel a præceptoribus in schola edocti, pastorum curæ traduntur publice in Ecclesia, ante S. cœnæ usum, (usitatissime sub tempus visitationis a Senioribus ipsis,) hoc ritu :

1. Præleguntur verba Christi: "Venite ad me omnes," &c. Matth. xi. 28, cum subjuncta brevissima exegesi.
2. Pueri et puellæ ad id destinati, et aliquoties prius a pastore examinati, in medio Ecclesiæ collocantur, ordine.
3. Tum interrogantur, velintne fœdus in baptismo cum Deo initum, renovare, Deut. xxix. 10, &c. Jos. xxiv. 22, Isa. xliv. 5.
4. Annuentibus, foederis capita explicantur ad formam ab Apostolo præscriptam, Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, jubenturque illi aperte coram Ecclesia abrenuntiare Satanæ, mundo, carni, &c.
5. Reposcitur ab eis fidei professio : illi igitur symbolum Apostolicum clara voce omnes simul recitant.
6. Tum genibus flexis, Ministro præeunte, Deum orant, ut delicta juventutis condonet, et se ad omne beneplacitum voluntatis suæ Spiritu Sancto suo corroboret : quod -mox et totus populus, pro iisdem deprecans, facit.
7. A precibus nunciatur novellis illis, ut et toti Ecclesiæ, absolutio, jusque filiorum Dei in participanda mensa Domini.
8. Additur tandem et ritus Apostolicus manuum impositionis, Marc. x. 16, Hebr. vi. 2, Act. viii. 16, 17, cum invocatione adhuc super illos nominis divini, ad roborandam cœlestis gratiæ spem. (Videatur quid de

hoc confirmationis ritu consuluerit Erasmus, præfatione in Paraphrasin Matthæi.)

IV. FORMA S. CŒNAM CELEBRANDI.

Usitate S. cœnam quater anno celebramus. Non quod non crebrius possit (solet enim, cum usus fidelium postulat, crebrius), sed ob unanimitatem. Instante autem synaxi, potissima cura est omnes ad digne participandum disponendi. Ideoque,

1. Duabus (vel tribus etiam) ante hebdomadis, sacer ille actus denuntiatur, omnesque officii sui in probandis semetipsis admonentur. Præmittitur etiam concio de fine, dignitate, usu mysterii hujus, cum exhortationibus variis : quoque intermediis per id tempus concionibus eodem semper alludendo. Tum per eosdem dies peragitur conscientiarum censura et examinatio, hoc modo :

Accessit (ante denuntiatam S. cœnam) ad se pastor presbyterium, inquiritque, "Num ad istud vel illud tempus communio sacra indici possit? an non adsint impedimenta?" Tum inquirit in auditorum vitam et conversationem, "an non scandali aliquid subortum sit alicubi? aut num aliquem in aliqua re increpandum, monendum, docendum, putent." Hebr. xii. 12, 13, 1 Cor. i. 11. Prout igitur convenerit, ita pastor et communionem indicit, et conscientiarum examen instituit. Comparet quisque paterfamilias cum domesticis suis, apud pastorem (die et hora sibi assignatis) ibique examinantur, " quam diligentes sint in præstanto divino cultu, publice et privatim? an precibus quotidianis domi cum præmissa psalmodia et Scripturarum lectione vacent? quem inde

capiant fructum et profectum?" Atque tum examinantur, juniores præsertim, quomodo hoc illudve intelligant? Tum de ratione vitæ, "an honesta conversatione doctrinam Dei nostri ornent? quomodo liberi parentibus, et famuli heris suis pareant?" Similiter patres- et matres-familias, "Num satis bono exemplo suis præeant? num ad pietatem et bonos mores diligenter satis instruant?" Ubi facile occasiones utiliter aliquid monendi, docendi, dehortandi, occurrunt. Qui parum digne se gerens deprehensus fuerit, jus accedendæ communionis ei non conceditur, nisi seriam serio pollicitus fuerit emendationem. Quod si contumaciam superaddit, suspenditur omnino et removetur; donec præfractam cervicem jugo Christi submittat. Id enim ita fieri debere, exemplum Apostolorum, potestasque a Christo illis et successoribus collata, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6, 8, nos docuit.

2. Ante ipsum cœnæ S. actum verbi divini prædicatione omnes ad spiritualem esuriem et sitim excitantur, Act. xx. 7, 11.

3. Tum precibus ardenter misericordiam Dei implorantes, peccatorum remissionem, et dignam mensæ Dominicæ participationem, sibi expetunt.

4. Mox eis nomine Christi peccatorum venia (absolutio) et jus filiorum Dei, solemnissime nomine S. S. Trinitatis nunciatur, Act. xiii. 38, 39, 1 Joh. ii. 12, 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

5. Recitat Minister verba Testamenti, panem in populi conspectu frangens, et calicem manu prehendens. Tum adjungit brevem verborum exegesin, mysteriique hujus ad mentem Christi facta declaratione, non in elementis hærere, sed sursum corda tollere docet. Tandem omnes

digne præparatos ad sacrūm epulum Christi nomine invitat.

6. Accedunt proinde, debita cum veneratione, primum pastor cum ministris Ecclesiæ quotquot adsunt ; post magistratus ; tum seniores Ecclesiæ seu presbyteri, et denique populus reliquus, habita ætatis etiam ratione : ut primo viri, tum adolescentes, tandem pueri accedant, uno et altero presbyteris, ne quid indecori admittatur, aut extraneus aliquis, vel profanus, temere se ingerat, attendente. Demum foeminae. Procumbimus autem in genua sacram sumendo coenam, non superstitione idololatrica ; sed quod per temporum conditionem aliter hactenus non licuit : (majores quippe nostri anno 1494, stando communionem introduxerant, sed excitata ob id atrociore persecutione, desistere fuerunt coacti). Quum et ipse hic in genua procumbendi ritus, pie a piis usurpatus, devotionem ipsam, et in conspectu Dei humilitatem, adeoque gaudium cum tremore augeat. Interea vero totus populus hymnis de passione Christi, salutiferisque beneficiis, Deum laudat.

7. Postremum gratiæ aguntur Deo (toto iterum cœtu in genua provoluto); exhortatio ad pietatis studia instituitur; benedictionisque divinæ denuntiatione cœtus in pace dimittitur, eleemosyna in pauperes gratitudinem contestans suam.

V. FORMA CONJUGES COPULANDI.

Applicaturis ad matrimonium animum, ne quid inconsulis parentibus, cognatis, pastore (qui felices successus a Deo exorare collaboret) tentent agantve, auctores hortatoresque sumus.

2. Clandestinas contractiones prohibemus omnino : in secus facientes disciplina extenditur.

3. Ipse copulandi actus publice fit : ubi (præmisso aliquo sacro textu, et ex ejus occasione de conjugatione monitis utilibus) neogami evocantur, coram coetu præsente, actorum istorum futuro teste, quam libere, Gen. xxiv. 57, 58, quamque legitime coeant, interrogantur ; voto conjugali sibi invicem (ad indissolubilem mutui amoris et fidei nexum) obligantur : a Ministro, dextris prehensi, legitimi conjuges pronunciantur, verbisque Christi ("quod Deus conjunxit hominem se jungat," Matt. xix. 5, 6), in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti confirmantur.

4. Fiunt vota pro neogamis ad Deum.

5. Neogami in spem divinæ benedictionis eriguntur, eaque ipsis nomine Dei confirmatur : præsentes vero omnes ad pie, modeste, temperanter convivandum (ebrietate, scurrilitate, choreis, aliisque scandalis semotis) admonentur.

VI. FORMA ÆGROTO VISITANDI MORTUOSQUE FUNERANDI.

In morbo gravi constitutus nostrorum aliquis Ecclesiæ precibus sese commendat ; quæ pro ipso fiunt, Jac. v. 14, 15.

2. Visitatur a Ministro, Matt. xxv. 36, verbo Dei primum poenitentiæ commonefit, Isa. xxxviii. 1, tum ad fiduciam misericordiæ et salutis erigitur. Monetur insuper, ut quicquid Deus de ipso disponere voluerit, paratus sit ad utrumque, Phil. i. 23, confidatque postquam in fide Filii Dei vixit, non iturum e morte in judicium, sed in vitam æternam.

3. Si eucharistiæ usu adhuc in spiritu roborari petit, non abnuitur; advocatis tamen aliis quibusdam, ut vere sanctorum communio sit.

In funeribus deducendis pius alibi quoque usitatus mos servatur; ut nimirum pastor, cum juventute scholastica, cantu deducant mortuos fideles ad sepulturæ locum: ibique funebri concione pro re nata præsentí populo (ex verbo Dei) proponatur, quod institutioni, solatio, cautione, serviat.

VII. CONSuetudo CIRCA DIES FESTOS.

Inter dies festos primam tribuimus dignitatem *septimo diei, dominico*: quem arbitramur nemini hominum ad operas externas et serviles, ullo etiam libertatis christianæ prætextu adhibere licere. Idque propterea, quod institutionem ejus non pro ceremonia, sed pro parte moralis, æternum inviolabilis, legis agnoscimus. Quoniam,

1. Ante ipsam scriptam legem jam inde ab orbe condito institutus, et quasi universo mundo indictus, peculiarique benedictione consecratus est Gen. ii. 3.

2. In ipsa quoque lege diem septimum, non inter ceremonialia instituta reperimus, sed in ipsissimo *Decalogo*: qui non a Mose, ceremoniarum et umbrarum promulgatore, sed ab ipso Deo cœlitus, voce majestatis promulgatus, et in tabulis lapideis digito Dei scriptus fuit, Exod. xx. 8, 22, xxxi. 18.

3. Non reperimus ullum præceptum toties per legem et Prophetas repetitum, et tantopere efflagitatum, ut præceptum de Sabbato. Non verisimile est, Deum ceremoniam tanti facere potuisse; præsertim protesta-

tum, non se requisivisse ceremonias, Psalm. l. 8, Jer. vii. 22, 23.

4. Nusquam Deus toties ad proprium exemplum provocat, ut in hoc præcepto: quia nempe ipse quievit ab opere suo externo, ut et nos quiescamus, Exod. xx. 11.

5. In hujus mandati violatores tantopere Deus exardet, ut eos simpliciter morte tolli velit, Exod. xxxi. 14, Num. xv. 35. Observatoribus contra, hujus et æternæ vitæ præmia pollicetur, Isa. lvi. 2, et lviii. 13, 14.

6. Nec abscondit rationem Deus, cur tam ardenter hoc desideret a populo suo. Quia, inquit, "hoc signum est inter me et vos, per generationes vestras, me esse Jehovah, qui vos sanctificat," Exod. xxxi. 13, Ezech. xx. 12.

7. Ideo Christus, quamvis Dominus sabbati, Marc. ii. 28, sabbatis tamen feriabatur: non quidem Pharisæico ceremoniali ritu, sed ita ut semper fere Sabbatis verbum Dei doceret, operaque misericordiæ ægrotos restituendo, exerceret, Luc. iv. 16, 17. Similiter Apostoli translatâ Sabbati gloria in primum diem, accurate dies illos observabant: ad cogendos nimirum cœtus sacros, in illisque habenda pietatis exercitia, adeo ut sæpius vesperi etiam, et ad noctis medium, una congregati perdurarent, 1 Cor. xvi. 2, Act. xx. 7, 10, unde et nomen ei, *dominici diei*, indiderunt, Apoc. i. 10.

Sanctificamus vero diem dominicum hoc modo:

1. Quiescendo a laboribus externis: a vectando nimis, bajulando, et tractando, quæ ad victimum et opificia externa, negotiationemque, spectant; ut famulitium quoque, et jumenta, tranquillæ respirationi vacare pos-

sint, Exod. xx. 10, Nehem. xiii. 15. Magis vero abstinendo ab operibus carnis, ebrietate, choreis, alea, otiosis divagationibus, et nugis; itemque a nuptialibus conviviis, nundinis, et mercatibus. Sed et hoc moris erat (præsertim sub magistratu Ecclesiæ patrocinante) ut die sabbati dominicum præcedente mature, ante solis occasum, omnes a laboribus externis desisterent, et cum adventante vespera, diei Deo sacratæ sanctificationem auspicarentur.

2. Tractando spiritualia et divina: decantando nimurum hymnos, et legendō Scripturas, jam ipso Sabbato vesperi: mane autem et toto dominico die, cœtus frequentando, sacra meditando et agendo; non semel tantum vel bis, sed (ut ante dictum) quater vel quinquies. Quia enim Deus totum hunc diem a censu aliorum exemit, sibique soli, tanquam sanctum suum diem, attribuit, Exod. xx. 9, 10, Isa. lviii. 13, convenientissimum putabant majores nostri, si potior ejus pars in communī fidelium congregatiōne transigatur, eaque ratione supervacaneis divagationibus, otio, vanitatibus aliis (quas Deus a sancto die suo abesse vult, Isa. lviii. 13.) præcavendis, occasio sit. Ideo etiam a revidendis redditibus, recognoscendis accepti et expensi tabulis, a debitisque exigendis dehortamur: ut omnes temporariorum potius obliti æterna meditari discant, Heb. iv. 9.

Celebramus præterea præcipuorum Christi operum memoriam certis diebus: nempe *adventus* (seu *incarnationis*), *nativitatis*, *mortis*, *resurrectionis*, *ascensionis*, *Spiritus Sancti missionis*, item *circumcisionis*, *epiphanie*, *transfigurationis*. Præterea *Apostolorum* et aliquot

martyrum dies: sed hos eadem christiana liberate, qua cæteri, memoriae solum causa, et in occasionem constantiæ atque patientiæ exempla in martyribus proponendi, atque subinde aliquid utile populum admonendi, Heb. xiii. 7. Peracta enim concione, et precibus, æque ut cæteris diebus ad operas omnes se conferunt, Exod. xx. 9.

VIII. RITUS CIRCA DIES PRECUM, SEU SUPPLICATIONIS PUBLICÆ ET SOLEMNIS.

Quater anno, seu trimestri quovis, certos dies observamus, ad redintegrandum in populo pœnitentiæ studium. Ubi (die mercurii et die veneris) congregatus diligenter populus e verbo Dei, pro temporum necessitate, instituitur: tum peccatorum fit confessio, Deique misericordia, pœnarum cum deprecatione, imploratur: ut Deus Ecclesiæ pacem, operarios fideles, nutritios pios, concedat, concessos Spiritu sapientiæ et consilii gubernet; lapsos et aberrantes convertat et erigat, infideliū quoque gentium misertus Ecclesiæ suæ aggreget. Et quia dies illi nobis pœnitentiales dicuntur, admonetur populus recipiscentiæ veræ, jejunii, sobrietatis, elemosynarum, Matt. v. 44, 45, et ix. 38, 2 Thess. iii. 1. Et ut toto die in domibus suis, vota et suspiria ad Deum repeatant; præsertim hora meridiana, pomeridiana, vespertina, quisque paterfamilias cum snis.

IX. RITUS JEJUNIORUM.

Docemus jejunium consistere, non in ciborum delectu, sed abstinentia ab omni cibo et potu, somnique etiam

evitazione, ad certum tempus: saltem ad vesperam usque, nisi alicujus valetudo non ferat.

2. Non usurpamus id opinione meriti, aut cultus divini partem; sed ut carnis mortificandæ, humilitatisque et super peccata contritionis excitandæ, medium; et ut ad divina meditandum mens sit sedatior, Zech. vii. 5, Isa. lviii. 5.

3. Ejusmodi jejunia indicare solemus.

1. Diebus precum solemnium, ut modo dictum est.

2. Instante aut ingruente periculo quopiam belli, pestis, persecutionis, vel unius etiam Ecclesiæ, aut hominis.

3. Cum ministri Ecclesiæ diligendi et ordinandi sunt in Synodis.

Stimulamur vero ad usurpanda ejusmodi jejunia, tam exhortationibus, quam exemplis Scripturæ sacræ, Joel. ii. 12, 15, 2 Cor. vi. 5, Psal. xxxv. 13, Jon. iii. 8, Act. xiii. 3.

X. De ELEEMOSYNIS.

Has ut ultroneas oblationes inferunt auditores ærario Ecclesiastico, pro voluntate sua, in usum pauperum fidelium, Luc. xxi. 1.

2. Id vero ut liberum est quoties alicui allubescit, ita conjunctim non nisi diebus precum, et jejunii, sacraeque communionis, atque si extraordinarie necessitas ingruat, colligi solent, 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

3. Erogari autem solent et distribui inter pauperes, pro necessitate cujusque: sive quosdam in ptocho-trophiis nutriendo et convestiendo, sive alias morbis vel ætate confectis, opis aliquid subministrando.

4. Quælibet Ecclesia suas habet Eleemosynas, quibus suis pauperibus succurrat. Si quæ autem egentior sit, quam ut suis pauperibus sufficiat, ex aliis Ecclesiis aliquid impertiri solet: ut juxta Apostoli præscriptum, “aliorum abundantia suppleat aliorum defectum,” 2 Cor. viii. 14.

5. Neque Eleemosynæ nomine id solum nobis venit, quod in ærarium Ecclesiæ deponi solet; sed omnia quoque misericordiæ opera. Nempe quicquid humanitatis in Christi nomine proximo quis exhibet, cibum, potum, vestem, habitationem, medicamentum, aliaque vitæ necessaria præbendo.

6. Ad quas Eleemosynas homines excitari solent doctrina Scripturarum: quæ ad eas exhortantur et instruunt, iisdemque præmia largissima promittunt, Deut. xv. 7, 8, Prov. xix. 17, Math. vi. 3, 4, Luc. xiv. 12, 13, 14, Hebr. xiii. 16.

CAP. IV.

DE ORDINE DOMESTICO MINISTRORUM.

Pastores Fratrum in domibus suis secum adolescentulos, honeste natos, bene a parentibus educatos, et quod ad ministerium animum applicaturos spes sit, antiqua consuetudine alunt, litteris divinis et pietate imbuunt, ad moresque honestos, modestiam, obedientiam, formant: quandoque etiam laboribus externis, ut et adultiores acoluthos, diaconos, ministros novellos (tam otii vitandi causa, quam inopiæ necessitate, 2 Reg. vi.

1, 4, 1 Cor. iv. 12), adhibent. Cujusmodi exercitia ordine certo procedunt: ut nempe destinata sit hora surgendi, preces agendi, studia et labores tractandi, prandendi, cœnandi cubitumque èundi, Eccles. iii. 1. Dato enim campanula signo, surgunt omnes; lotique et induiti, genibus simul flexis Deum laudant, Psal. v. 3. Tum se ad lectionem ac meditationem sacrorum quisque confert. Post horam circiter iterum datur signum, et convenient jam omnes pariter domestici, Psal. lxxxviii. 13, et cxix. 147, 148, Prov. viii. 34, ibique cantu psalmi aut hymni præmisso, Scripturæ partem prælegit, declarat, exindeque utilia monet, et ad Deum laudandum et invocandum cohortatur, sive pastor ipse, sive cuius ea die vices sunt. (Omnes enim ministerio destinati, ad pueros usque, talibus exercitiis adhibentur.) Peractis precibus, redit quisque ad operas suas, legendo, scribendo, memoriæ mandando, vel etiam (ubi scholæ habentur) lectiones latinas audiendo. Atque ex his postmodum quidam ad scholas exterias, parentum vel antistitium sumptu, emittuntur; prout vel necessitas exigit, vel res angusta domi permittit. Pomeridianum tempus, tanquam studiis minus accommodatum, plerumque externis operis transmittitur, usque ad cœnam: exceptis, qui in juventute civica instituenda occupantur. Hora tamen pomeridiana secunda iterum ad preces (Apostolico exemplo, Act. iii. 1), convenient, iisque peractis ad operas redeunt omnes. Quantum a cena temporis superest, vel musicæ exercendæ, vel psalmodiæ datur. Tandem vespertinæ preces, Psal. lv. 17, finem imponunt, et quilibet ad quietem se confert: neque nocturnæ sessitationes, multo minus domo egres-

siones, cuiquam permittuntur. Ideoque domus tempestive clauditur, clavesque vel patrifamilias, vel custodi sequentis diei traduntur. Prandii et cœnæ tempus nec silentio, nec nugis, transmittitur; sed recitant memoriter pueri vel morum præcepta, vel cateschesin, vel cantilenas aut psalmos, quos memoriaræ mandare jussi sunt; adultiores vero partem aliquam textus sacri ex ordine. Quantum supersit temporis, proponitur Theologica quæpiam (ordinarie ad locum communem ejus hebdomadis spectans) quæstio; in qua enodanda quisque (ab infimis facto initio) suas experitur vires, pastor denique concludit. Aliquando etiam (quæstionis illius loco) aliquid prælegi jubetur. Habent et distributa inter se officia ordinis domestici omnes: ut omnes jam a pueritia attentioni et solertiae cuidam, ad vocationis munia dextre obeunda necessariæ adsuescant, nec quisquam frustra pane vescatur. (Majoribus majora, minora minoribus committuntur: minoribus nempe cura malluvii, mensarum instruendarum, conclaveum everendorum, etc.; majoribus cura ostii domus, cellæ, granarii, hortorum, horologii, bibliothecæ, munditiei, ut nemo sine attentione exercenda relinquatur, suo et communi bono.)

MUNIA COMMUNIA, SED PER ORDINEM ADMINISTRANDA,
DUPLICIA SUNT.

Quædam domestica, ministris, diaconis, acoluthis, communia: quibus unus una dies fungitur, secundus secunda, tertius tertia, usque ad postremum. Decurionem, seu ordinis custodem possis dicere: cuius officia

sunt, 1. Surgendi campana signum dare; 2. Lychnum accendere; 3. Cantum ante preces moderari; 4. Textum prælegere; 5. Parænesin instituere; 6. Si quis a precibus aut studiis absit, notare; 7. Sub prandium quæstionem aliquam discursui subministrare, (quod et pariter de coena et precibus vespertinis intelligendum); 8. Tandemque sub noctem domum undique occludere; clavesque pastori, aut cui debentur, assignare.

Alia sunt *munia publica*, solorum qui concionibus ad populum habendis exercentur, diebus nempe profestis. Id quoque procedit per ordinem; ut mature quisque se præparare, omnes vero in prophetandi dono proficere, possint, Numer. xi. 29, 1 Cor. xiv. 31. Cui fini hoc etiam inservit: quod ubique per viciniam auditores sunt, qui ob distantiam justo majorem, vel ob morbos, non satis commode cœtum communem frequentare possunt, emitit pastor diaconos, vel acoluthos (sive singulis diebus dominicis, sive per intervalla), qui eis verbum Dei loquantur. Quod utrinque prodest: auditoribus scilicet nullibi neglectis; ministerii vero candidatis ubique et semper augmenta capientibus. Ideo mature se meditationi textuum dominicalium accingere solent omnes; vel triduo ante. Die enim Sabbati matutina prece peracta, inquirit pastor, quid meditatus jam sit unusquisque, super crastinum textum? enarrant igitur, acoluthi primum, tum alii consequenter. Pastor denique concludit, et quo potissimum respectare, aut quid urgere (pro temporum et occasionum diversitate) omnes, ut et quo unusquisque abire et ubi docere debeant, indicat.

Huic etiam legi, ob evitanda varia incommoda, omnes qui Fraternitati nomen dederunt, subjacere tenentur, ut

ne quid proprio arbitratu audeant: sive domo egrediendo (inconscio pastore aut administro), sive sibi utensilium aliquid comparando, sive epistolas (alicujus momenti) aliquo mittendo, sive aliquid rerum suarum alio concedendo, sive alienum quid in depositum sumendo; multo minus vero operam suam ad consignandos contractus, testamenta, chirographos (verbo ad ulla politica) commodando.

Minores, pueri et acoluthi, sustinent hebdomadatim examen, quid egerint, quid didicerint, quam decore in omnibus se gesserint. Annuatim vero omnium domesticorum officiorum renovatio fieri solet, circa anni primordia: non solum quia personæ mutari, et ab alio pastore ad alium (pro necessitate) transferri, solent; sed etiam ut redintegratio fiat ordinis boni, in omnibusque amor et obsequium ejus conscientiæque studium excitetur. Atque hic etiam ratio reddi solet, quem auctorem quis eo anno et quanto cum fructu evolvit; novumque aliquod pensum anno sequenti datur.

Tandem Unitatis institutum est, ne quis pastorum aut adjutorum suorum absque necessitate, et quantum fieri potest, Senioris sui consensu, peregre proficiscatur: et quum proficiscitur, ne alibi quam in Fratrum domibus (nisi ubi desint) divertat, et pernoctet. Hic enim excipi, et pro re nata tractari solent. Paræneses vero sive ad preces privatas, sive ad populum e suggestu, hospitum corolla sunt: ad contestandam et stabiendam doctrinæ et animorum harmoniam; ut hac etiam re primitivæ Ecclesiæ vestigia premantur, Act. xiii. 15.

CAP. V.

DE ORDINE DOMESTICO AUDITORUM.

Non se solos Fratrum ministri ordine bono continent, sed auditoribus quoque fidei suæ commissis, idem per domos suas imitandi auctores sunt: nempe,

1. Ut quemadmodum vocavit unumquemque Deus, constituitque, sive patrem vel matremfamilias, sive liberum, sive servum, ita quisque stationem suam in timore Dei tueatur, 1 Cor. vii. 20, Ephes. iv. 1.

2. Ut cultui divino vacent omnes, matutinis, meridianis, vespertinisque horis, ante et post cibum: Deum invocando, hymnos cantando, sacra legendo, 1 Tim. ii. 1, et iv. 5, Deut. viii. 10.

3. Cœtus sacros ne deserant sed diligenterfrequentent, suosque secum ducant, Heb. x. 25.

4. Liberos et famulitium in religione pie instituant: diebus dominicis potissimum, quantum quis e concionibus sacris observarit, sub prandii et cœnæ tempus diligenter exigendo, Deut. vi. 7, Ephes. vi. 4.

5. Patres- et matres-familias ut studeant suis bono præaire exemplo, eosque ad imitationem adigant.

6. Mundanas dissolutiones, ebrietatem, choreas, pejorationes, sermones turpes, aleam, et similia nec intra domos ferant, nec suis alibi permittant.

7. Operis debitibus suos famulos et liberos quotidie exerceant: otiaque, ut adolescentiæ venenum, fugere faciant.

8. Pietatis, juxta moralem legem, omnes sint observantissimi.

9. Patresfamilias per cauponas et popinas ne divagentur; otio, potationibus, lusibus, tempus ne terant; neque noctu domo absint, sed rebus suis intenti super suos etiam excubias agant.

10. Victum quærendi rationes illaudatas et suspectas ut fugiant: scenerationibus et usuris omnino abstinentes, propter interminations Dei, concurrentesque varias iniqüitates, 1 Thess. iv. 6, Exod. xxii. 25, Psal. xv. 5.

11. Ad tribunalia ne quis facile se proripiat, sed intervenientes dissensiones amice potius inter fidei consortes ut componantur; sive in presbyterio, sive per delectos arbitros.

12. Observatum id quoque fuit a majoribus, ut tam abeuntes peregre negotiorum causa, quam migrantes ad habitandum alio, pastoribus id indicarent, preces Ecclesiæ pro se peterent, testimoniumque ad alios pastores sumerent: ut si alicubi consilio, instructione, ministerio opus, fides certius constaret. Ordinis enim gratia nec auditores ad aliorum pastorum ministeria se conferre, nec pastores alienis auditoribus ministrare, debent: ne inordinata ista licentia in abusum, et disciplinæ detrimentum, abeat.

Cujusmodi piis institutis adsuetus populus, non invitus intra hos se continet cancellos. Si quid vero exorbitationis intercurrit, per admonitiones sedulas redigitur in ordinem 1 Joan. iv. 6, 2 Cor. vii. 15, 1 Cor. xvi. 16, et 2 Cor. ii. 9.

CAP. VI.

DE VISITATIONIBUS.

Certum est, nullum vel exquisite institutum ordinem sine attenta inspectione durare posse, Ephes. iv. 16, Heb. xii. 18. Eo enim fine magister suos discipulos, paterfamilias operarios, imperator milites, subinde intervicit et spectat; quia impossibile est, sine adhortationibus, dehortationibusque, in officio retineri homines. Atque hac de causa in Fratrum Unitate, non solum inspectio pastorum in auditores, ut jam dictum, sed et inspectio episcoporum in pastores ipsos, totasque Ecclesiias, introducta est: Apostolorum scilicet exemplo, qui quas fundarant Ecclesiias, easdem visitando confirmabant, Act. xiv. 21, 22, et xv. 36, 41. De visitationibus igitur Ecclesiarum dicendum,

1. Quando institui soleant?
2. A quo peragi?
3. Quæ sint visitatorum expeditiones?

1. Visitationes instituuntur ita, ut semel anno Ecclesia quævis lustretur; quod usitate verno, aestivo autem, autumnalive tempore fit. Necessitate autem exigente (ut si pastor Ecclesiæ præsentandus, aut scandalo cuiam obviam eundum) etiam hyeme. Si non sufficient visitatores eodem anno Ecclesiis omnibus, differuntur sequentem in annum eæ, in quibus urgentis necessitatis minus observatur.

2. Incumbit vero cura hæc episcopis proprie, ut per suam diœcesin quisque cum consenioribus collegis Ecclesiias visitet. Quodsi legalibus prohibeatur impedi-

mentis, conseniores mittit, Apostolico exemplo 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2. Assumi quoque solent e vicinia pastores, unus et alter, ad majorem populi, pastorum concordiam spectantis, de omnibus quæ hic fiunt, fiduciam. Pastor vero visitandus mature commonefieri solet.

3. Operæ visitatorum quædam sunt *ordinariae*, aliæ *extraordinariae*.

Ordinariae vel *privatum* cum certis personis; vel *publicæ* in toto cœtu, expediendæ.

Quam primum enim visitatores locum attingunt (vel ante meridiem sabbati die) mox,

1. Pastorem ipsum seorsim sciscitantur, quomodo se Ecclesiæ suæ res habeant? quid expediendum maxime veniat? Tum inquirunt in eum ipsum, sitne “servus fidelis et operarius inconfusibilis?” 2 Tim. ii. 15, “quam attendat lectioni, exhortationi, doctrinæ?” 1 Tim. iv. 13, quam præeat pietatis exemplo? ib. v. 12. Tum quomodo vitam sustentet? Quomodo *alumnos* Unitatis educet? Qualem se eorum quisque exhibeat? quomodo obediatur? quomodo proficiat? Postea in *populum*, crescatne an decrescat grex; (jubentque sibi catalogum exhiberi). Habeatne aliquos scandalosos, quibus remedii aliquid esset adhibendum? presbyteri et presbyteræ, eleemosynariique, quomodo officium faciant?

2. Accersuntur pastoris adjutores et alumni (ministri, diaconi, acoluthi) interroganturque: an proposito sanctificationis suæ perstent? quomodo in pietatis studio progrediantur? quomodo concordiam fraternalmque dilectionem colant? Colos. iv. 8; quomodo a pastore tractentur? annon damnosum aliquem patiantur defec- tum? quantum temporis ad studia sibi concedatur? et

quomodo id impendant? quid per id tempus unusquisque egerit? (Solent enim a visitatoribus quandoque tam pastori, quam contubernio ejus auctores legendi subministrari: id igitur an, et quo cum fructu sit factum, inquiritur, et aliud quid evolvendum, describendum, peragendum, injungitur.)

3. Tum advocantur *presbyteri*, quibus absentium seniorum et Ecclesiarum nomine salute nunciata, quæstio fit de pastore. Quomodo officium faciat: an verbo et opere ædificet? an non per ipsum aut aliquem domesticorum ejus, aliquid suboriatur scandali? denique, utrum aliquid notent publice expediendum, quod totius Ecclsiæ intersit?

4. Presbyteras quoque accersitas alloquuntur: quomodo munere suo, junioribus sororibus attendendo, fungantur? an non intercedant inter alias odia, invidiæ, dissidia, calumniæ, luxus vestiarius, etc.

5. Solent etiam revideri (vel præsentibus ædituis et presbyteris) inventaria supellectilis domesticæ; ædifica itemque, an non pessumire sinatur aliquid?

6. Ubi magistratus cum cœtu est consentiens, hunc quoque visitatores salutant, et, an pastore suo sit contentus cognoscunt.

Publicæ autem visitatorum operæ in Ecclesia sunt, 1. Verbi Dei prædicatione ad amoris Dei ardorem inflammare: 2. Sacræ cœnæ administratione omnes in fide et caritate Christi confirmare: 3. Exhortationibusque variis pro ratione status, ad facienda alacriter posthac officia, excitare.

Extraordinarii visitatorum labores, aliquando tantum intervenientes, sunt: vel *reconciliatio dissidentium*, cui

pastor non sufficiebat (ut si inter cœtum et pastorem aut magistratum, litis aliquid intercedat) ; vel *initiatio novelli ministri* (de qua ceremonia supra) ; vel *introductio novi pastoris* ; vel *ordinatio presbyterorum* ; vel denique *templi dedicatio*.

I. PRESBYTERORUM POLITICORUM ORDINATIO.

Presbyterorum ordinatio, quum opus est, hoc ritu peragitur. Jubentur ante concionem vespertinam mature se sistere omnes viri, ibique præmissa a visitatoribus admonitione, eligunt liberis votis quos munere illo dignos existimant. Pluribus itaque votis designati, vespertina concione finita a visitatore evocantur, illisque officia muneris hujus (toto auscultante cœtu) præleguntur : illi vero voce et stipulata manu antistitibus Unitatis, pastori, Ecclesiæque suæ, fidem et diligentiam obstringunt. Atque ut in templo quoque inspectorum munere fungi possint, peculiari etiam sessionis loco (ad commodiorem populi intuitum) cohonestantur.

Similiter proceditur cum eliguntur presbyteræ ; excepto, quod solo fœmineo sexu præsente res peragitur.

II. TEMPLI DEDICATIO.

Templorum *dedicatio*, seu *consecratio*, apud nos hoc fit modo :

1. Congregata Ecclesia, præmissoque sacro cantu, declarat visitator, cui fini domus hæc exædificata sit ? nempe ut sit *Bethel*, domus Dei, et porta cœli, Genes. xxviii. 17, 19, Isa. lvi. 7, Luc. xix. 46, illi itaque usui nunc dedendam et consecrandam esse.
2. Memorat, sanctificatorem omnium unum, solum,

perfectum, Deum esse, qui dicit: "ego sum Jehova sanctificans vos," Exod. xxxi. 13. Et de tabernaculo a Mose erecto: "sanctificabo tabernaculum fœderis, et sanctificabitur in gloria mea," Exod. xxix. 43, 44. Et ad Salomonem de templo exædificato, "exaudi orationem tuam, et sanctificavi domum hanc, ut collocem hic nomen meum," 1 Reg. ix. 3. Ideoque hortatur, ut nunc ad Deum omnes convertant oculos, humiliisque orent, ut hic etiam ponat nomen suum, Deut. xii. 5, 11.

3. Procumbunt itaque in genua, totus cœtus, et oratione pia, ad Salomonis imitationem, 1 Reg. viii, Deum ardenter invocant.

4. Admonitio fit, cum protestatione, ne ad alios usus adhibeatur sacer ille locus, quam ad habendos sacros cœtus, sacramque sanctissimi Dei cultum, in præsentia electorum angelorum peragendum.

5. Et quia "omnia per verbum Dei et orationem sanctificantur," 1 Tim. iv. 5, habetur etiam mox verbi divini prædicatio, sacraque Synaxis.

6. Tandem denuo invocatur nomen Dei; votoque benedictionis divinæ, omnibus corde recto hic Deo servituris affuturæ, actus clauditur.

CAP. VII.

DE ORDINE ET GRADIBUS DISCIPLINÆ
ECCLESIASTICÆ.

Quomodo per inspectionem variam ordinis fiat custodia in Unitate, dictum est. Jam autem non satis esse hortulanum plantas, præceptorem discipulos, patremfamilias operarios, intervisere ; sed illi esse stolones putandos, isti mendas tollendas, huic ignavos increpandos et castigandos, ratio dictitat. Opus igitur Ecclesiæ quoque *disciplina*, qua exorbitantes inclamentur, obsequi renuentes confundantur, præfracti castigentur, putrida denique et tabida membra amputentur ac abjiciantur. Ideo Christus : “ Bonum est sal, habete igitur sal in vobis, et pacem habete invicem,” Marc. ix. 50. Item, “ si peccaverit in te frater tuus, vade et corripe eum,” Matth. xviii. 15. Item, “ si te scandalizat manus tua, vel pes tuus, abscinde ea, et abjice,” ver. 8, 9. Apostolus denique testatur, disciplinam esse filiorum Dei tesseram : “ Si disciplinam sustinetis (inquit), tanquam filii vobis offert se Deus. Si autem absque disciplina estis, cuius participes sunt omnes filii, utique nothi estis, et non filii,” Heb. xii. 7, 8.

Atque his de causis tam salubri instituto divino, *disciplinae*, subdiderunt se jam inde a primordiis Unitatis nostræ omnes, qui in sanctum hoc fidei et caritatis consortium confluxerunt ; summi, imi ; seniores, conseniores ; ministri, administrî ; auditores omnes, nobiles et ignobiles ; ipsique adeo magistratus : antidotum peccati id esse credentes, si sciant esse, qui vitæ et

conversationi suæ attendentes, monendi et revocandi, adeoque in periculosa deviatione retrahendi potestatem habeant, Psal. cxix. 71, et cxli. 5, 2 Cor. vii. 8, 9, 10, 11. Hactenus igitur disciplinæ subjacent omnes in Unitate, ab infante usque ad senem, a subdito usque ad dominum, ab acolutho usque ad episcopum: idque bono suo, et aliorum. Homo etenim cum sit unusquisque, labi potest, Prov. xxiv. 16, Jac. iii. 2. Sed ne in lapsu perseveret, atque ita conlanguescat, emoriatur, pereat, remedium a Christo animarum archiatro præscriptum est, disciplina, ut vidimus. Quæ cum administratur caute, prodest non illi soli in quo exercetur, sed et aliis. Hinc Apostolus: “peccantes coram omnibus argue, ut et cæteri timorem habeant,” 1 Tim. v. 20.

Gradus autem disciplinæ (ex Christi præscripto, Matt. xviii. 15), sunt tres:

1. Admonitio, sive correptio, occulta.
2. Increpatio, et confusio, publica.
3. Excommunicatio, et ab ecclesia exterminatio, talis.

Primo enim docentur hic omnes, id juris a Christo concessum esse, imo legem impositam, *ut curam quisque habeat fratris sui: ac, si videat delinquere, erroris fraterne commonefaciat*, 1 Thessal. v. 11, Heb. iii. 13. Ut igitur ausit frater fratrem, soror sororem, commovere, præsertim senior quisque juniores, id suadent. Si quis autem admonitionem talem neglexerit; ut alius majoris auctoritatis, qui cum illo eodem nomine in spiritu mansuetudinis agat, subornetur: quod potissimum alicui e presbyterio, aut pastori ipsi, competit.

II. *De disciplina publica leniori.*

Si nulla sequitur emendatio, sistitur toti presbyterio, et admonetur varie, ut peccatum agnoscat et desistat. Si flectitur, cum admonitione et consolatione dimittitur: si contumax esse pergit, conscientia ejus clavium potestate ligatur, et a communione sacræ cœnæ suspenditur, donec ad se redeat, moresque corrigat.

Id in levioribus delictis ita: in gravioribus vero, et notoriis peccatis, aliter proceditur. Nempe citato peccatori ad pastorem et presbyterium, quoties opus est, peccatum exaggeratur. Si gravitatem agnoscit, et intra se confusus vere dolet, erigitur in veniæ spem, Act. iii. 17, 18, 19, certis tamen conditionibus. Nimirum

Primo, ut aliquandiu in poenitentia vera Deum peccata deprecando, carnem mortificando, vitæque emendationem re ipsa exhibendo, sese exerceat (cujusmodi poenitentiæ exercitium vel ad proximam communionem, vel ultra, extenditur, prout se fructus poenitentiæ proferunt: non negligente interim Ecclesia pro lapsis ad Deum vota.)

Secundo, ut postmodum Ecclesiæ tristitia affectæ (omnes scandalizatos publice, aliquando per se, aliquando per pastorem deprecando) satisfaciat, eique se ratione ista reconciliet. Quod si tamen peccatum non omnino publice notum est, depreciatione coram presbyterio acquiescitur. Omnia eo fine, ut confusus peccator verius resipiscendi, atque cautius posthac agendi, cæteri vero alieno periculo sapiendi, occasionem habeant, 1 Tim v. 20.

III. *De excommunicatione incorrigibiliū.*

Si scelus nimis flagitosum sit, aut peccator poenitentiæ loco contumaciam exerceat, transitur ad extremum

clavium gradum, *excommunicationem*: quam Christus et Apostoli in Ecclesia usurpari volunt, Matth. xviii. 17, 1 Cor. v. 5, &c. Hic igitur peccator a sanctorum communione totaliter exclusus, Satanæ traditur, nisi adhuc resipiscat. Excommunicatione publice promulgata, populus totus, obsignaturus quasi quod nomine Christi actum est, exclamat, *Amen*: non absque suspiriis et lacrymis piorum. Ita excommunicati obstinati peccatores pro publicanis et ethnicis habentur, quemadmodum jussit Christus. Neque tamen spes gratiæ ulli negatur, si per seriam poenitentiam a damnationis via in salutis viam regredi velit. Quod si cui poenitentiæ gratiam dari vident, gratulantur: et post sufficientem poenitentiæ, utrum seria sit, probationem, publice iterum cum lætitia totius Ecclesiæ, recipiunt, 2 Cor. ii. 7. Atque ita *alteram clavium partem* (poenitentibus cœlum aperiendo) administrant.

Disciplina hæc Ecclesiastica, per omnes gradus, nec hypocritice, nec impetuose et tyrannice, sed ut Apostolus monuit, Gal. vi. 1, "in spiritu lenitatis, et cum compassionem intima," 2 Cor. ii. 4, 5, 6, 7; "nomine et auctoritate Christi," 1 Cor. v. 4; "in ædificationem, non destructionem," 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6, et xiii. 10, in delinquentes extendi, a poenitentibus auferri, solet.

CONCLUSIO.

Atque hi sunt ritus ordinis nostri Ecclesiastici, quos majores nostri e verbo Dei haustos amplexi, per duo jam secula, multa cum persecutio[n]e et patientia, sed multo suo et populi Dei cum fructu, observarunt, pariterque nos (nihil hactenus ædificationi proprius serviens animadvertisentes) observare, cum Deo annitimus. Si quibus Ecclesiis aliis eandem hanc, aut similem, ordinis rationem sequi allubescit, non invidere, collaudare potius Deum parati sumus ; modo obtineat Apostolicum illud, “ omnia decenter et secundum ordinem fiant,” 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

Deus misericors eundem sibi complacentem ordinem sanctum inter nos, et ubique per christianitatem suam, stabiliat, firmet, perficiat, in Ecclesiæ suæ salutarem ædificationem, nominis autem sui laudem ! Amen.



ACCOUNT
OF THE
Ecclesiastical Discipline and Order
IN THE
UNITY OF THE BOHEMIAN BRETHREN.



P R E F A C E.

HISTORY informs us that the Bohemian nation, after they had been happily enlightened with the Gospel by the ministry of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, were yet enticed back again into obedience to the apostate See by fresh devices of Satan, at the Council of Basle, A.D. 1433 ; the cup, with a few other things, being all the concessions they obtained. The city of Tabor alone, unwilling that the light which had been kindled should be hid under a bushel, held out for many years, defending with the sword their purity of doctrine and their constancy in the faith ; until they also fell, partly overreached by guile, partly overborne by force. However, as many as yet remained of the pious followers of Huss, being animated by a divine zeal, again took courage, and seceding from those pseudo-Hussites, the Calixtines, in the year 1457, happily succeeded, with Divine assistance, in forming congregations in many places, and also a consistory of their own. For shortly before that time, a body of the Waldenses, being driven from France, had settled with one or two of their bishops in the neighbouring part of Austria ; and to them our people sent a deputation with the view of explaining their entire purpose, as well as of seeking their advice, and forming a christian union with them. The Waldenses applauded their

object, and advised that provision should be made against a deficiency of faithful pastors, if those congregations now embracing the pure doctrine of the Gospel were to be kept together, and that therefore they should not wait until individuals who had received the Romish ordination, induced by love of the truth, might come over to them, but have an ordination among themselves, as the necessity of the case required. And since the Waldenses affirmed that they had regular bishops, and a regular succession uninterrupted from the Apostles, they in a solemn manner created three of our ministers *bishops*, and conferred on them the power of ordaining ministers. But as the name of *bishops* had become odious through the anti-christian abuse of it, they preferred to employ that of *Seniors* and *Anti-stites*, which has been the practice up to the present day. As to the proposed union, before it could be carried into effect, these good Waldenses were again dispersed, and their chief bishop Stephen burnt alive at Vienna. Our brethren in Bohemia likewise endured many persecutions, yet by the protecting care of God they were preserved from extirpation. Indeed, the number of the faithful rather increased, so that towards the close of the 15th century there were about two hundred congregations in Bohemia and Moravia, many of the nobility piously giving them countenance. But how much labour and blood it cost to lay the foundations of this orthodox fraternity appears from the histories which are in our possession.

With respect to the name of the *Fraternity*, it was derived from the circumstances of the case. These

men were in truth the genuine offspring of the holy martyr Huss; yet the Calixtines had forestalled the denomination of *Hussites*; and moreover our people would not venture to take their title from men, contrary to the prohibition of the Holy Spirit.* They therefore called themselves by the most commendable name of *Brethren and Sisters*, an appellation most suitable for Christians. But in their public Apologies, and in their books they termed themselves "*Brethren of the Law* (or rule) *of Christ*," with reference to the leading principle of Huss, "that the law of Christ is sufficient for the "government of the church militant, without the addition of human laws," and being anxious to guard against a departure from this principle, either by themselves or their posterity. And because they had established a settled order among themselves for the preservation of unanimity in faith and charity, they designated their entire body "*The Unity of the Brethren*," as it is applied at the present day. And as the churches were everywhere occupied by the Romanists, or by the pseudo-Hussites, the Brethren were under the necessity of erecting oratories of their own in different towns; and their pastors having no regular incomes had to support themselves by the labour of their own hands.

Afterwards, when God, in compassion to Germany, raised up the great Luther, the Brethren sent several deputations to him and to other distinguished teachers of the Gospel in the Empire; when they discovered that there was indeed a harmony of doctrine between

* 1 Cor. i. 12, 13.

them in the principal and in most points, but in regard to order and a stricter discipline, they bore away the palm in comparison with others ; as is testified by the letters still extant of Luther and others, either addressed to the Brethren or having reference to them.

Now, although they would have preferred an absolute union with the other reformed churches in Germany and elsewhere, yet perceiving various dissensions springing up among them, they judged it to be their duty to stand aloof from party disputes, and cultivate Christian friendship with both sides ; bestowing meanwhile the more solicitous care on their own congregations, especially with regard to discipline, the more they perceived that the prevalence of those contentions was the consequence of neglect or laxity of discipline.

Subsequently, when the Protestants in Germany had been vanquished in the war of Smalcald, and Ferdinand inflicted punishment on his Bohemian subjects, as confederates of the Protestants ; having confiscated the properties of several of the nobles, he ejected the congregations of the Brethren thence, and in the year 1548 expelled them from the kingdom. These proceeded in three companies into Great Poland and Prussia, where they disseminated the doctrine of the Gospel, and founded several congregations.

At length, when, in the year 1609, the Bohemian States had obtained from the Emperor Rudolph the free exercise of religion, and proceeded to reduce to one uniform plan all the evangelical churches that had diverse rituals,—the patrons and antistites of the Brethren were directed to explain *what they had peculiar to*

themselves, especially with regard to discipline and order, when they produced the following statement. This met with approbation, but as it was not thought practicable at that time for the churches to be reduced to this form, the indulgence was granted to the Brethren (who were, moreover, admitted to the common consistory of the kingdom), to retain their own form of discipline and order, “until Providence should offer “something more perfect, which might be alike suitable to all.”

But that nothing might, in the meantime, be omitted which seemed conducive to the constant observance of this good order, and, that remissness might be the more surely guarded against, which is apt to creep in gradually, unless there be a watchful foresight in these matters ; this formulary, containing, as it were, a recognized code of laws, was revised and completed in the General Synod held at Zerawich in Moravia, in the year 1616, and presented to the entire body of the ministry for perusal and thorough consideration in all its parts. This having been done, it was approved by all, and confirmed by the signatures of the Seniors and Conseniors present from Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland ; to the end that not only a more certain account of this matter might be left to posterity, but also that the obligation of every individual to a careful observance of these regulations in mutual charity might be the more binding.

And moreover, as there were those who wished this formulary to be published, while some pious persons in other countries and belonging to other churches were

understood to have the same desire, it was at length determined in the Synod, which was held by the dispersed Fraternity in the year 1632 at Lissa in Poland, that it should be printed. During those times, indeed, God seemed to be chastising us with another kind of discipline (doubtless for our desertion of our first love, and declension from our former zeal);* yet was it judged unfit, that, through any negligence of ours, what had once after holy consideration been settled by our ancestors, and up to this time found in practice beneficial for the promotion of piety, should go into oblivion, and be as it were buried in darkness. It was rather fitting to devise means that what is out of joint may be set right, and entire distortion avoided, nay rather that perfect soundness may be restored.† And that this may take place among us, as well as among all Christ's faithful people, may God vouchsafe to renew and establish us with His heavenly grace, for the glory of His most holy name. Amen.

THE SENIORS AND MINISTERS
of the Unity of the Brethren.

* Rev. ii. 4.

† Heb. xii. 13.

ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER

IN THE

UNITY OF THE BOHEMIAN BRETHREN.

It is sufficiently evident from instances furnished by the world at large, that no society of men, no kingdom, state, or family, yea, no created thing, can subsist without a fixed order; but that all things would otherwise fall at once into confusion and ruin. So neither can the *Church*, which is “the house of God,” and “the city of the Great King,” and “the Kingdom of God,”* consist without a fixed order. [1] Hence the Apostle, “Let all things be done decently, and in order.”† And although precisely the same order may not be found in all churches, yet it is certain, that in proportion as any particular church is distinguished in this respect, will be the degree of its stability and prosperity. Induced by this consideration, the original founders of our Unity, [2] having withdrawn themselves from the idolaters, had in view not solely, although chiefly, to restore purity of doctrine and simplicity of Christian life, but also by the bond of order to maintain these blessings among themselves, and to promote their own advancement in them.

* 1 Tim. iii. 15; Ps. xlviii. 2; Matt. xx. 1.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

Therefore, with the help of God, they both disposed themselves for that holy fellowship, and adapted their regulations for the pure worship of God, and the edification of the church; considering how they might best effect this, either after the model of the apostolic and primitive church, or as the conditions of their church, then exposed to persecutions, permitted. This we now proceed to describe, arranging it in seven chapters.

- I. The order of the whole Unity in general will be set forth.
- II. The order of the Ministers and Synods.
- III. The order of the Church Service, or the mode of publicly performing Church rites.
- IV. The domestic order of the Ministers, or manner of the private life of the Ministers.
- V. The private order of the Church Members.
- VI. The order of visitations, or of the inspection exercised by superiors over those placed under them.
- VII. The order of discipline, by which all these are held together as by a chain.

CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING THE ORDER OF THE WHOLE UNITY IN
GENERAL.

THE order of the Unity of the Brethren in general consists, partly in a certain distinction of *things* pertaining to the sacred worship of God, in accordance with His word; and partly in a classification of *persons* who are with one accord engaged in the service of God in that congregation, and the connection and union of them with one another by certain duties.

ORDER OF THINGS.

As the Brethren perceived that all things were in confusion, and no distinction made between what was necessary and what was not, or at least between what was more necessary and what was less so; and, still worse, that the fundamentals of salvation were generally neglected, while attention was bestowed on what was external; they commenced by laying down a distinction of the things which are comprised in Christianity :*

Namely, that there are in Christianity

some things { *Essential,*
Auxiliary, (ministerialia)
Accidental.

Essentials of Christianity they termed those things in which the salvation of man is immediately placed: namely, on the part of God, *the grace of God the*

* Jer. xv. 19; Hos. viii. 12; Matt. vii. 9; Gal. iv. 10.

Father, the merit of Christ, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and on our part, *faith, love, and hope*. By *faith*, understanding an acknowledgment of the benefits of God, and the especial application thereof to ourselves; by *love*, an ardent zeal to love God in return, and to obey him in all things; by *hope*, an unshaken assurance of persevering in these graces, and thus of attaining the end of faith. Without these they taught that no one could be saved.

As the *Auxiliaries of Christianity* they regarded those means divinely bestowed upon the Church, by which the *grace of God the Father, the merit of Christ, and the operation of the Holy Spirit* become known to, and are conferred upon us; that is, by which faith, love, and hope are enkindled, cherished, and strengthened in us. These are the *word of God, the keys, and the sacraments*. For the *word of God* reveals those essentials to us;* the *keys* assign them;† the *sacraments* seal them.‡ Hence they teach that the *ministry of the Church* is necessary, not on its own account, but because of those essentials; and that there is no other object to be sought in or by the ministry, than the advancement of purity of faith, ardour of love, and firmness of hope,—hope, that in life and death, and in the midst of all temptations, may cling unshakenly to the mercy of God.

Accidentals of Christianity they called those things (termed by others adiaphora, or things indifferent) which relate to the time, place, and mode of exercising those auxiliaries; that is, *the ceremonies and external*

* Ps. xix. 7—11.

† John xx. 22.

‡ Rom. iv. 11.

rites of religion. These things, they were of opinion, should be used in accordance with Christian liberty and prudence, in such a manner as that they might not only prove no obstacle to faith, love, and hope (by withdrawing the mind from them, for instance, or by obscuring them; both of which effects follow from idolatrous and superstitious ceremonies), but rather that they might serve to illustrate and impress them.*

Now, it is these things that the order of our Unity has chiefly in view. For the *Essentials* and *Auxiliaries* of Christianity we have, in common with all Christians, if they were but aware of their own privileges, and had a distinct understanding of them.† In the *Accidentals* we possess what is perchance diverse from others, but yet derived from no other source than the Divine direction variously indicated in the Scriptures, and drawn from the examples of the primitive church. [3] The nature of them, and their adaptation to the end proposed, we now proceed to explain in the presence of the Church; not representing them as involving what is necessary to salvation, but as presenting a better order, and one more conducive to edification, as our own experience has taught us. Yet we neither so pertinaciously maintain them, as that we would not give them up, if anything better were offered in their place;‡ nor, on the other hand, do we think it right to make any change on slight grounds.§ Hence it is that no one among us is allowed to introduce new

* Rom. xiv.; 1 Cor. xiv.; Col. ii. 16.

† Rom. x. 12; Eph. iv. 3—6.

‡ Phil. iii. 15, 16; 1 Thess. v. 21.

§ 1 Cor. xi. 2.

senses or opinions, or to perform new ceremonies, or to write or publish books, without previous examination, and the general approbation.

THE ORDER OF PERSONS.

FIRST, AMONG THE PEOPLE.

The order of Persons is such a classification of all, that each one in the place assigned him may know exactly what authority he should exercise, or what obedience he should yield, and what regard or duty he owes to this or the other person ; as well in respect to *the people as the ministers*.

Our ancestors were used to arrange *their people or hearers* in three classes, according to the degrees of labour to be undertaken on their account,—leaving the natural and political government in full force, as of husbands in regard to their wives, parents to their children, masters to their servants, and magistrates to their subjects :

Namely, as *Beginners*,
Proficients, and

Perfect, or going on unto perfection.*

Beginners are such as are learning the Catechism, and the first elements of religion ; as the *children* who have been placed by their parents under the care of the pastors ; also *adults* who have come to us from the idolaters, or such as have been otherwise neglected ; and who, if they commit themselves to the care of the ministers among the Brethren, usually pass through a period of previous instruction and probation.†

* Heb. v. 13; 1 Cor. ii. 6; et Isid. lib. 2, Eccles. cap. 21.

† Heb. v. 11—14.

Proficients are such as having become well acquainted with the elements of religion, being received under the pastoral care, and admitted to a participation of all the mysteries of the church, exercise themselves more and more in the knowledge of the will of God, and in its practical observance, and thus conforming themselves to the order of the church, maintain their sanctification.*

The Perfect [4] they termed such as had made eminent attainments in the knowledge of Divine things, and had become so established in faith, love, and hope, as now to be able to enlighten others, and to exercise a superintendence over them for the preservation of order.†

From these are usually elected :—

1. *The Civil Elders, or Overseers.*
2. *The Curators of the Alms.*
3. *The AEdiles.*

THE CIVIL ELDERS.

These are respectable, grave, and pious men, chosen from the whole congregation, in order to watch over the conservation of all the rest. To them is given authority to warn and reprove others, in whom any impropriety is observed; to reconcile persons at variance; and to reduce to order whatever irregularity they may have remarked;—and this, either by themselves, or together with the pastor, to whom they are assigned as helpers.

* 2 Cor. vii. 1; Heb. vi. 1.

† Rom. xv. 14; 1 Cor. ii. 6; Phil. iii. 15.

Also in outward matters touching their domestic affairs, the younger men and youths are wont to seek their advice, and are faithfully counselled by them: a regulation which, judging by the examples and the practice of the *ancient church*, we think ought by all means to be maintained.*

In like manner, from the females there are chosen respectable, prudent, and grave matrons, to attend to their own sex, who are furnished with like authority.† [5]

THE ALMONERS.

The Almoners are prudent men, distinguished for their virtue and faithfulness, to whom is committed the charge of the treasury, in which each of the hearers deposits his contributions, whenever he pleases, so as his left hand may not know what his right hand doeth.‡ These, as often as is requisite, draw money from thence, insert the amount in the books, and distribute it amongst the poor, but with the cognizance of the pastor. As far as is in our power we guard against mendicity among our people, according to the command of God.§ It is their duty also to make provision for orphans, widows, the sick, and those who are in exile for the Gospel, that they may not be utterly destitute.

THE AEDILES.

The Aediles are men of repute, to whom is committed the care of the sacred buildings, and those

* Exod. xviii. 21, 22; Dent. i. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 4, 5; 1 Tim. v. 17.

† Rom. xvi. 1, 3, 12; 1 Tim. v. 9, 10; Tit. ii. 3, 4.

‡ Matt. vi. 3.

§ Deut. xv. 7—11; Rom. xii. 8.

which the ministers occupy. Therefore they receive the collections which are usually made once a quarter ;* they enter separately the contributions of each, and expend the money on repairs of the buildings, and for other purposes of the church ; and once a year they render to the congregation an account of their receipts and payments ; when they are usually released from the office, which is somewhat laborious, and others are chosen in their place.

Such is the order among the Brethren as regards the hearers ; to which all without reluctance conform, as knowing, both from the word of God and their own experience, that it is conducive to edification. Nor does any one obtrude himself into any office, as thereby he would be an object of contempt : but each one, being regularly elected by the whole assembly, undertakes the duty with as much confidence as the rest feel in committing it to him.

THE ORDER OF THE MINISTERS IN THE UNITY OF THE BRETHREN.

The Ministers of the Church are with us *priests† or pastors of the congregations*, ambassadors for Christ to

* 2 Kings xii. 10, 11.

† The Brethren do not object to the term *priest*, as far as it denotes a person dedicated to sacred things, and not one who offers sacrifice. Yet the Bohemian word *Knez* is better, signifying a person set over the people, for like the Hebrew *Cohen*, it means both a priest and a prince. Yet as they are not ignorant that some others are offended with the Latin term *sacerdos*, they generally avoid it, and (as they do) call them the Ministers of the Church. However, in this place, where the ministerial degrees are spoken of, it is needful to employ a distinct appellation.

the people.* Their office is to administer the word, the keys, and the sacraments.

From these priests our ancestors were accustomed to require neither the knowledge of languages nor of philosophy, more especially as, through want of scholastic institutions, this could not be obtained. But if they saw a man well nourished in the words of faith, with ability to teach, sober, prudent, and possessing the other qualifications which the apostolic canon requires in a minister of the church,†—content therewith, they recognized such an one as a true ambassador of Christ. This practice met with the approbation of Doctor Luther, at the same time that he advised them to add, as far as was in their power, the study of languages; which from that time, where practicable, has been done.

These have under them novitiates destined for the service of the church, as their assistants; and above them, for the maintenance of order, their Bishops or *Antistitites*.

Those who are under their authority and care are the *Acoluths* and *Deacons*.

ACOLUTHS.

Acoluths are youths admitted by the pastors of the congregations into their households, that they may be trained for the future service of the church in learning and morals with more care than they could be with their parents or elsewhere. Thus Samuel was trained

* Cor. v. 20.

† 1 Tim. iii. and Tit. i.

under Eli,* Elisha under Elijah,† and the company of the sons of the prophets under their elders.‡ Thus also Christ fostered and trained the disciples before He entrusted them with the ministry. So Paul had Timothy, Titus, Luke, as his attendants and companions ; whence also ἀκολούθια (acoluthia) is expressly ascribed to them.§ And hence it is, that this degree has obtained in the Church ever since the apostolic times.||

THE BRETHREN ASSIGN THESE DUTIES TO THEIR ACOLUTHS.

1. That while they distinguish themselves beyond other youths by an orderly, modest and pious deportment, they should be accustomed to show alacrity in obedience, and in the spontaneous service of God and the Church, and so exhibit the gentleness which becomes disciples.¶
2. That they should exercise themselves in the rudiments of Theology, by reading and committing to memory the larger Catechism, the Gospels, and the shorter Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and those of Peter ; also Psalms and Spiritual Hymns.**
3. The reading of Scripture at family prayers is committed to them ; and sometimes an exhortation on the same occasion from the passage read ; and this, both in order to prove what measure of aptitude for teaching God may have conferred upon any one, and

* 1 Sam. iii. 1. † 1 Kings xix. 21. ‡ 2 Kings iv. 38.

§ In the Greek Text, John xxiii. 22 ; 1 Tim. iv. 6 ; 2 Tim. iii. 10.

|| Vide Cyprian, lib. iii. Epist. xxiii. ; and the Canons of the Councils.

¶ 2 Tim. iii. 10, 14. ** 2 Tim. iii. 15.

for the gradual attainment of that boldness of speaking in the power of God, the exercise of which in the presence of the church will in due time be needed.* It is their office (whensoever it is not otherwise provided) to call the people to the public service by tolling the bells, to open and close the church, to light the church at the early services before day-light; and thus to fulfil these, the inferior ecclesiastical functions.†

4. To teach the Catechism in the schools to the children of Christian parents.‡

5. To attend their superiors on their journeys, both for the purpose of rendering them service, and that they may everywhere be witnesses of their seemly manner of life, and so learn to conduct themselves everywhere with propriety.§

6. In case of necessity, the reading of the Scriptures, together with some commentary, is entrusted to them also in the smaller public assembly; or even, if they are capable of it, the delivering from memory of a short address and prayer. This the pious hearers receive with indulgence.

THE DEACONS.

The Deacons are elder Acoluths, now in the course of preparation for the ministry. These the ministers of the Brethren employ as their assistants, after the example of the Apostles.|| For although they were originally ordained by the Apostles for the service of

* Luke i. 4. † 1 Sam. iii. 1, 15. ‡ Acts xviii. 25, 26.

§ 2 Tim. iv. 11, and ii. 3. || Acts vi. 2, &c.; Phil. i. 1.

tables, yet it is evident that they both preached and baptized (as Stephen and Philip),* and were advanced to a higher degree, namely, of the Ministry or Presbytery.† Hence this degree of the diaconate was uniformly maintained in the primitive church, as is evident from the canons of the Councils; on which account, although like many other things it has been turned to abuse by Antichrist, it ought not to be banished out of the church.

THE BRETHREN ASSIGN THESE DUTIES TO THEIR DEACONS.

1. To apply constantly and intently to the study of sacred theology, and prepare themselves suitably for the ministry.‡
2. To instruct the youth in church and school in the fundamentals of religion.
3. To exercise themselves in delivering discourses to the people.
4. To administer baptism, whenever directed by the pastor; for Christ also allowed his disciples to baptize before he committed to them the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.§ So also Peter allowed his,|| and we have already shown that the deacons of the Apostles administered baptism.
5. When the Holy Supper is celebrated in a large congregation, and there are not sufficient Ministers present, the Deacons are also employed in distributing not only the cup, but the bread; yet the Minister alone, having the power of the keys, may pronounce

* Acts vi. 10, and viii. 5, 12, 35, 38.

† 1 Tim. iii. 13.

‡ 1 Tim. iii. 13.

§ John iv. 2.

|| Acts x. 48.

the absolution to the people, and solemnly deliver the words of institution.

So the Acoluths and Deacons are the assistants of the Ministers. The Bishops and Coadjutors, or Seniors and Conseniors, are the rulers of the Ministers, or Watchers and Overseers, who jointly form the ecclesiastical Senate, or as others denominate it, the Consistory of the Unity.

CONCERNING THE ANTISTITES OR SENIORS.

The Antistes or Bishop is with us a person distinguished by his age and divine gifts, elected by the suffrages of all the Ministers for the maintenance of order in the whole Unity, confirmed by the solemn rite of ordination, and then supported by public authority ; taking care that all the rest, each in his place, may discharge their duty, and that the work of God may proceed everywhere free from scandals and confusion.* Of such Bishops there are four, five, or six, as necessity may require ; to each of whom is assigned a diocese, or a certain number of churches and pastors.† [7] Their eminence, in comparison with the other ministers, consists in no distinction of honours or revenue, but of labours and cares for others : “He that is greatest among you,” saith Christ, “let him be as the younger ; and he that is chief as he that doth serve.”‡ And according to the canons of the Apostles, *Presbyter* and *Bishop* are one and the same, save that the term Bishop

* Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. v. 1.; Concil. Carthag. 4.

† 2 Cor. x. 13—16; Gal. ii. 9.

‡ Luke xxii. 26; Matt. xxiii. 11; Mark x. 44.

signifies *inspector* or *superintendent*. And thus also the Bishops of the Unity are of equal rank, save that one of them has the presidency for the sake of order. All these, having been once elected and appointed, remain in office during life, unless any one should conduct himself unworthily.

THE DUTIES WHICH THE ANTISTITES HAVE IN COMMON
ARE THESE.

1. To watch over purity of doctrine and efficiency of discipline throughout the whole Unity ; in accordance with the command of Christ, “ who hath given authority “ to his servants, and to every man his work, *and hath* “ *commanded the porter to watch.*”*
2. To provide that youths of good parts, may be carefully trained for the future service of the Church ; as the prophets instructed their sons, and Gamaliel brought up Paul at his feet.†
3. To ordain acoluths, deacons, ministers, and conseniors to their respective degrees.‡
4. To exercise faithful care over all the ministers, deacons, acoluths, widows and orphans in his diocese.
5. To keep lists of the churches in his diocese, and to acquaint himself with their wants, and with the members, at least the principal of them.
6. To assign suitable pastors to the churches, and to change them as circumstances may require, yet not without the cognizance of the other Bishops.
7. To make an annual visitation of the churches of his diocese (concerning which we shall treat hereafter.)

* *Mark xiii. 34.*

† *Acts xxii. 3.*

‡ *Tit. i. 5.*

8. To administer reproof to ministers and pastors who overstep their office. (But the excommunication of a minister is competent only to a whole Synod : all things "according to the power which the Lord hath given to edification, not to destruction.")*

9. If any persecution or danger is impending, either over the whole Unity or some particular church, or individuals, it is their duty to consider how the peril may be met, or how, at least, some comfort and relief may be furnished to those who are the subjects of it.

10. Each Antistes of the Unity is bound to care for the Library, and to increase it as much as he can with useful books.

11. The care of the printing-office of the Unity devolves upon all alike : but the oversight of it falls to the one who lives nearest.

12. And since it is hazardous to commit absolute power to a single individual, or to a few, each is bound to defer to the judgment, not only of his colleagues, but also of the Conseniors, and to receive their admonition, advice, and reproof. From this decision, as the legitimate judgment of God, there is no appeal, except to a general Synod ; from whence an appeal cannot be made, except to Him who hath conferred the power of giving judgment upon the Church.

THE DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT.

One of the Bishops has the office of *President* ; his duties are :—

* 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

1. To convene the ecclesiastical council (Senatum) as often as he thinks it needful ; yet with the knowledge and consent of his colleagues.

2. When they are met, to explain the occasion of their assembling, and after reminding them of the uncertainty of all human deliberations without Divine assistance, to excite them to prayer, and thus consecrate the subsequent transactions.

3. To inquire whether the decisions of the preceding Synod or assembly have been carried into effect. Then to state what is proposed to be done in the present assembly ; and to request each to mention, what he thinks should form a subject of deliberation : the Secretary immediately recording all the propositions. Afterwards they deliver their sentiments in order, beginning with the younger members. The President collects the opinions, weighs them, and according as the chief reasons preponderate, forms the conclusion, which is entered by the Secretary in the Minutes.

4. It is also the President's duty to convene a general Synod when needful ; to appoint persons to provide all things requisite for the occasion ; and to take the lead in maintaining good order at the Synod.

THE DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITY.

The office of Secretary is usually entrusted to one of the Seniors. His duties are :—

1. To record the Synodal Acts in the church documents.

2. To possess a thorough knowledge of the acts and writings of the Unity.

3. To see to the writings published by our adversaries; and if an answer be required, and the Council give directions, to compose answers and to submit them to their judgment.
4. To apprise the Council if he perceives any defect in the writings of the Unity, and to supply it, in accordance with their unanimous judgment previously signified.
5. To take care that no individual in the Unity publish anything of his own will. In a word, to make himself acquainted with the causes and purport of all the books published and intended for publication. [8]

DUTIES OF THE CONSENIORES.

To every Senior are added two or three Conseniors, for the purpose of assistance; whom the ancients termed Chorepiscopi. [9] Their duties are:—

1. To constitute, in conjunction with the Seniors, the ecclesiastical Council, or Consistory.
2. To attend, beyond the other ministers, to the maintenance of good order every where; and to apprise their superior, of whatever they have any where observed to require correction.
3. By word and example to lead others to the observance of the laws, statutes, and praise-worthy customs.*
4. To look out for persons fit for the several degrees of the ministry.†
5. To determine where, in what department, and

* Phil. iv. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 2.

† Tit. i. 5.

how, each minister and assistant may labour with advantage, and what may therefore be committed to each.

6. In conjunction with their Antistes, to exercise discipline over the ministers.

7. To visit the churches in company with him; or without him in case he directs, and those churches which he does so direct.

8. To examine the acoluths, deacons, and ministers called up for ordination; and after examination to present them with a faithful testimonial to the Seniors.*

9. To watch over the neighbouring pastors of their own district (especially such as are immediately committed to their oversight), and observe in what manner they discharge their duty. If they remark a slight irregularity, it is their duty to correct it; but in the case of graver and scandalous offences, they must as soon as possible apprise the Senior.†

10. To maintain inviolable secrecy respecting the deliberations of the conferences.‡ [10]

* 1 Tim. iii. 10.

† 1 Thess. v. 14.

‡ Prov. xx. 19.

CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE SYNODS, AND THE RITE OF
ORDINATION.

FOR weighty reasons (namely to provide for the necessities either of the whole Unity, or of some one diocese) we hold either *general* or *particular* Synods.

A *General Synod* is usually held every three or four years; at which attend all the Seniors and Conseniors, the pastors and ministers, also the deacons and acoluths, nay even the patrons of churches, especially those living near. This is

1. For the purpose of renewing and confirming brotherly love and concord.*
2. To stimulate and strengthen the minds of all in the work of the Lord.†
3. To restore the vigour of order and discipline, if laxity should be any where detected, or is to be apprehended.‡
4. Occasionally also, that scandalous individuals may be expelled the ministry, or that the penitent may be solemnly readmitted.
5. To ordain ministers in whatever degree may be required.

These General Synods were not held in one fixed place, but in different places, as well in Moravia as in Bohemia. Poland, on account of its distance, only sent delegates to the Synods; as was at times the case from Bohemia to the Synods in Poland. [11]

* Rom. i. 11, 12. † 1 Cor. xvi. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 8. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 10.

This is the order of the Synods:—

1. All who are summoned appear on the day and at the place appointed.
2. Each takes up his abode in the place assigned to him; which is usually arranged in good time. [12]
3. In the evening, at the sound of the bell, all assemble in the church; thanks are offered up to God, and the Seniors give a paternal welcome to their guests.
4. After this they go to supper, according to the arrangement of the tables and the attendants, which is conducted (as it is also on the following days) with moderation, in the fear of God, and seasoned with pious and friendly conversation.* Some of the Conseniors are appointed to regulate all; as also daily afterwards to visit and salute them when sitting down at table.
5. The following morning a sermon is delivered by one of the Seniors or Conseniors, and so every day while the Synod lasts: there are also prayers in the afternoon and evening, with an admonition always from Scripture, on a topic suited to their common edification, or to the present state of things.
6. The ministers remain the whole day assembled in the church (as do also the deacons and acoluths in the place assigned to them), occupied with the subjects laid before them by the Seniors. [13]
7. The Seniors also in a separate room deliberate and determine regarding the positions of ministers, churches, or patrons, or whatever may be before them; yet in affairs of moment not without the consent of the ministers. [14]

* Eph. iv. 29, & v. 4.

8. Whenever it is needful to supply a vacancy in the Council, after prayer and fasting, they all severally write down the names of the persons for whom they vote, and deliver their papers sealed to the Seniors.

9. Also persons suitable for the degree of the ministry are selected from the deacons, regarding each of whom the ministers state in writing whatever they have remarked, whether praiseworthy or otherwise, and send it under seal to the Seniors.

10. Such as are accredited by favourable testimonials are examined by the Seniors and Conseniors.

11. Ordination to each degree is publicly performed : concerning which hereafter.

12. Moreover, at a General Synod the Holy Communion is always celebrated,* in order to renew mutual love, and joy in God ; when all the ministers of the Church who are present, together with the patrons and the believing people, communicate with joy and thanksgiving.

13. Towards the conclusion of the Synod various exhortations are delivered.† For example : "That each " would apply all that had been done in this Synod " to the glory of God, and his own edification ; that " each would walk worthily in the vocation wherein he " has been called, and set a good example to all under " him, so that the ministry be not evil spoken of in " any respect." Sometimes also special warnings are added against this or that vice and scandal, intermixed with the Divine threatenings and promises. Finally, the Synod is dismissed in peace, with benediction and

* Acts xx. 7.

† Acts xx. 25.

thanksgiving, with the prayer that God would henceforward grant a period of peace to the Church, and cause His work to prosper to His glory. An admonition is added that they should all conduct themselves devoutly, modestly, and in concord on their journey;* and at their return home salute their churches, patrons, and domestics in the name of the Seniors, and assure them of their faithful pastoral and paternal solicitude, their remembrance of them in prayer before God, and their unabated zeal to promote their welfare.† [15]

14. The Synodal Acts are registered for future reference; and each of the Seniors has a copy of them.

Particular Synods, consisting of a smaller number of Seniors and ministers, are called on account of sudden emergencies, which cannot be delayed till a general Synod: the business also not concerning the entire Unity, but a particular district; or a single church or individual. Yet the acts of such a particular Synod are immediately communicated to the absent Bishops, for the sake of holy unanimity.

As the ordinations of the ministers take place at the general Synods, we now proceed to describe them.

I. of Acoluths,

II. of Deacons,

There is an ordination III. of Ministers,

IV. of Conseniors,

V. of Seniors.

* Gen. xlvi. 24.

† Rom. xvi. throughout; Heb. xiii.; Eph. i. 16.; Phil. i. 3, 4; Col. i. 3.

I. THE ORDINATION OF ACOLUTHS.

Every pastor among us is under obligation to board one, two, three, or more boys of good parents in his house, to bring them up with a view to the ministry, and to take care for their instruction. In order to stimulate their love for the ministry, the elder of these youths are taken to the Synods, and, after undergoing an examination, for the purpose of ascertaining which of them may seem worthy of further care and promotion, and also that they may feel themselves bound to the Church, they receive the first degree of their vocation, that is, as acoluths.

Their ordination is conducted thus :—

1. A discourse is delivered on a suitable topic : as for instance, on *the imitation of Christ, the calling of the seventy disciples, the sons of the prophets, etc.*
2. They are called out in succession by name, and present themselves before the Church.
3. They are interrogated before the whole Synod, whether they are willing to devote themselves to the service of the Church ? whether they promise obedience ?
4. Their duties are read to them, (as stated before).
5. These they promise to observe, by giving their hands.
6. The former acoluths receive them into their company, by giving them their right hand.
7. The whole is concluded with prayer, the benediction, and singing.

II. THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS.

The Deacons are chosen from the elder acoluths, in this manner :—

1. They are examined by the Seniors whether they have now surrendered themselves entirely to Christ and the Church, and as to what degree of progress they have made in the study of theology.*
2. They are called by name before the whole Synod, when their duties are read to them from 1 Tim. iii. 8, etc.
3. They bind themselves by a vow to Christ and the Church.
4. Prayers are offered for them, and the Ordainer confirms them with the imposition of hands.†
5. The new deacons present the right hand to the Seniors and ministers, in token of holy obedience, and the former deacons do the same to *them*, in token of fellowship.
6. The solemnity is concluded with the benediction.

III. THE ORDINATION OF MINISTERS.

1. When Ministers are to be ordained at a Synod, every pastor who is about to take with him his deacon or deacons, gives notice to his church, that is, to the Presbytery, or civil elders ; who, in a letter addressed to the Synod, furnish a testimonial of the life, and conversation, and proficiency in preaching of their deacon or deacons, stating whether they consider them worthy of the ministerial degree. Public testimonies are also

* 1 Tim. iii. 10; Luke ix. 62.

† Acts vi. 6.

wont to be required of the legitimacy of their birth, that they may in every respect be free from reproach.

2. Then follows, in the Synod, the examination of the persons to be ordained, which is threefold.* For first, the names of the candidates for ordination are submitted to the consideration of the ministers assembled in the church; where the testimonials regarding each, with the votes for or against this or that individual, are sealed up by secretaries chosen for the purpose, and transmitted to the Seniors.

3. The second examination is conducted by the Con-seniors, who, admitting three or four at a time, inquire into their individual proficiency in theology, how far they have been "nourished up in the words of faith;"† also as to the purity of their intention in serving Christ and the Church;‡ lastly, respecting their age and stability of judgment.§

4. After this, each who has passed his examination thus far, is sent to a Bishop for an examination of his conscience, where the greatness and weight of the pastoral office are set before him, and he is asked if he can give himself up as a servant to Christ with a pure conscience,|| and without any view to gain, honour, and earthly advantage. If any thing censurable had been remarked in the morals of any one of them, the correction of it is earnestly urged upon him.¶ Finally, they are encouraged to hope, for Divine assistance by various consolatory assurances.** [16]

* 1 Tim. v. 22.

† 1 Tim. v. 6.

‡ 1 Tim. iii. 3.

§ 1 Tim. iii. 6. || 1 Tim. iii. 9 ¶ 1 Tim. ii. 14; Tit. i. 7, 8; Col. iii. 8.

** Heb. iii. 1; 1 John iii. 21.

5. Next day the ordination takes place ; a fast having been observed on the day previous, and solemn supplications offered up on behalf of the necessities of the Church.*

6. The Synod being assembled, after singing, a solemn discourse is delivered on the pastoral office. This being ended, the Ordainer comes forward, and

1. Reads a passage of Scripture.

2. He gives notice to the whole congregation, that certain persons are to be called to the holy functions of the ministry, and confirmed therein ; and directing his address to the candidates themselves, requests that when called upon they would obediently present themselves in the presence of God and the Church.

3. Afterwards; one of the Conseniors comes forward and repeats from a list the names of those who are to be ordained, who present themselves in order.

4. The Ordainer inquires, whether they bring a ready mind for serving Christ and the Church.

5. On their giving a modest assent, then are read from the apostolic canon certain portions applicable to this rite of consecration,† that seeing they are treading in the footsteps of the Apostles, they may have the firm persuasion of their heavenly calling.

6. The Ordainer goes on to inquire whether they are worthy of so important an office, lest the Church should incur reproach or disgrace through them.‡ On which two of the Conseniors come forward, and declare before the whole congregation that these men are of

* Acts xiii. 2, 3. † 1 Tim. iii. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 7.

honest descent, are imbued with sound doctrine, and are of blameless life, and worthy of being intrusted with the office of evangelists. [17]

7. Kneeling down, they are directed to call upon Jesus Christ, the chief Shepherd; after which all the congregation on their knees offer up supplications for them.

8. The duties of the pastoral office are read over to them.

9. They bind themselves with an oath of fidelity to God and the Church, that they will continue within these prescribed limits to the end. [18]

10. They are ordained by the imposition of the hands of the Bishops present, with invocation over them of the name of Christ, that He may vouchsafe to admit them into the number of His faithful servants, and to fill them with the gifts of His Spirit. Meantime the Conseniors, ministers, and all the people kneel, and sing "Come Holy Ghost," &c.

11. The new ministers are exhorted to the exercise of patience in trials, from which they will not be exempt, and are encouraged with the promises of an eternal reward after their labours have been faithfully fulfilled.* Then they cheerfully offer the right hand to the Seniors and Conseniors in token of obedience, and to the ministers in token of fellowship; while the deacons do the same to them as a mark of respect.† Meantime the Church sings a hymn composed from the hundred and thirty-third Psalm.

* 2 Tim. ii. 3 ; Dan. xii. 3 ; 1 Pet. v. 4.

† Gal. ii. 9 ; 1 Pet. v. 5.

12. This solemnity is wont to be concluded with the holy communion, all joining therein with thanksgiving.

ON THE INAUGURATION OF MINISTERS.

Ministers ordained among us do not rush into the administration of the sacred office, where and when they please ; but, soon after the Synod, visitations are held in those churches, which have new ministers. When the *visitor*

1. Treats on the care which Christ the chief Shepherd exercises over his Church, and exhorts them to a grateful acknowledgment of the favour.

2. He informs them that N. N. has been regularly chosen, called, and ordained, in order that it may appear that he has not obtruded himself,* but come on being called ; and that the believing people may acknowledge such as labourers whom the Lord sends into his harvest.†

3. He signifies that he will now make a commencement of his sacred office, in the plenary administration of the keys of Christ, and of the holy Supper ; and he directs him to come forward and address the Church.

4. The minister, after a profession of humility in following the Divine vocation, and having commended himself to the prayers of the Church,‡ kneels down, as do also the whole congregation, at the monition of the visitor, and prayers are offered for him.

5. The minds of all being now animated with confidence that their prayers are heard, the visitor takes the minister by the hand, and leading him to the altar,

* Jer. xvii. 16.

† Matt. ix. 38.

‡ Eph. vi. 19, 20.

or table of the Lord, presents him with the Ritual, and directs him to enter upon the administration of the keys, and of the sacraments of Christ; the people meantime looking on, and often shedding tears. (For these ceremonies are not retained from an idea of their necessity, but to shadow forth in some measure the dignity of the ministry, and to excite reverence for this oeconomy of Christ's.) [19]

6. The Communion is then celebrated by the new minister, after which the visitor pronounces the benediction on him and the whole church, and thus concludes the solemnity. Yet the entire management of any church is usually not committed at once to new ministers, but they remain for the space of a year or two as assistants to pastors, till they have acquired greater experience for the direction of conscience, and till the need of any particular church may require their services. And if meantime any one should purpose marrying, this can only take place under the advice and with the consent of the Seniors.

ON THE MANNER OF APPOINTING MINISTERS AS PASTORS OF CHURCHES.

When the time arrives for appointing some one as pastor to a church, as also when pastors are on account of circumstances changed, the transaction takes place in this manner :

1. No magistrates or churches among us seek or call pastors for themselves, as neither do the ministers canvass the parishes ; but each one goes where he is appointed, and that church acknowledges him as its

pastor. For it is the business of the Seniors to consider what kind of ruler each church may need, and in what situation every minister may be able successfully to carry on the work of the Lord. [20]

2. Hence, whenever a presentation to a church takes place, after the new pastor has preached a sermon, the visitor comes forward and informs them that this individual is assigned by the Seniors as pastor to this church, after mature consideration, and entreats that he may be received as a servant of Jesus Christ.* He likewise exhorts the minister to the zealous discharge of his duty, and to watch over this flock of the Lord committed to him. A protestation is then made by both parties, of the pastor to the people, and of the people (by one of the lay elders) to the pastor; the former promises pastoral care, the latter obedience as to a minister of Jesus Christ;† which is also confirmed by the elders giving their hands to the minister, in the sight and in the name of all the people; and the whole is finally sealed by prayers and the expression of mutual wishes for the Divine blessing.

3. The sacred assembly having been dismissed, the minister about to retire delivers to his successor, in presence of the visitor and the elders, a list of the hearers, together with the furniture belonging to the church and to the minister's dwelling; an amicable agreement is also made regarding other goods, in case a division is requisite.

* Phil. ii. 29.

† Heb. xiii. 17.

CASES IN WHICH THE MINISTERS ARE BOUND TO SEEK
THE ADVICE OF THEIR SENIORS.

Every pastor set over a church has power over the flock committed to him, in regard to all that the pastoral care requires: except that,

1. In more difficult cases, and such as are less usual (which sometimes present themselves to those engaged in the direction of conscience), they are instructed to do nothing without consulting the Senior, both that they may be accustomed not to depend on themselves alone, and also that what is done with the consent of several persons may be more calculated to promote edification.

2. Also, besides cases of this kind, each minister is bound to furnish his Senior from time to time (at least once in half a year) with an account of himself and of his congregation, either personally or by letter, that the latter may be the better enabled to discharge his office of superintendent, as not being ignorant of what is everywhere going on.

3. On the death of a magistrate or minister, the Senior is usually informed, that by his direction several ministers with one of the Conseniors may be able to attend the funeral as a mark of respect.

4. And as visitations (concerning which we shall treat hereafter) generally take place in the summer, every pastor usually makes inquiry of his Senior before Easter, Whitsuntide, and in autumn, whether he should celebrate the holy communion, or wait for the presence of the visitors.

IV. ORDINATION OF THE CONSENIORS.

Whenever necessity requires that the Council of the Church should be filled up, there are chosen from the ministers as many men as may be wanted, distinguished for their knowledge of affairs, their piety, and their exemplary lives. This is done by the votes of the ministers and Conseniors, each of whom, according as he regards this or the other equal to the duty, delivers his name under seal to the Seniors, or if at a distance sends it. They, after opening the votes, and ascertaining who have the majority, confirm these the next day among the number of the Conseniors in the following manner, after the delivery of a charge from Scripture on the intent of this office, or other needful topics :

Being called upon severally by name they stand forward before the Synod. They are asked whether they will engage to present more abundant service to God and the Church. On their expressing their determination to do so, the duties of the office about to be committed to them are read. Then the prayers of the whole church are offered up for them, and they receive the imposition of hands. After this they present the right hand to the Seniors in token of submission, and to the Conseniors in token of fellowship, and the other ministers do the same to them as an assurance of obedience. Finally, after prayer for the Divine blessing, the assembly is dismissed.

V. ORDINATION OF THE ANTISTITES.

On the death of one of the Seniors a general Synod

is called as soon as possible; or, if one has been held lately, then a particular Synod. However, all the Conseniors assemble, and a part of the ministers, the rest sending their votes. [21] On this occasion,

1. A day is first spent in prayer and fasting, that God may vouchsafe to "close up the breach," and "show whom he has chosen."*

2. In a special meeting the account of a good Bishop is laid before them from the Scriptures, and they are exhorted to look out such an one from the midst of them, laying aside every other consideration.

3. The assembly having separated, each writes down his vote, as well ministers as Conseniors and Seniors (yet without comparing or communicating their sentiments, but each as conscience dictates), and these votes when sealed are collected.

4. The Bishops alone in private open the papers, and firmly believe that he who is designated by the votes of the majority, is pointed out to them by God. However, they do not reveal the result to any one.

5. At length, on the following day, the company being again assembled, and having invoked the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Ordainer coming forward before them, announces that their prayers have been heard, and that God has now shown in what manner he would have the vacancy of the church filled up.

6. While all are intent, waiting to know who it may be, the Ordainer gives the admonition, that whoever may have been nominated, he should not refuse obedience to God who calls him, but present himself with

* Amos ix. 11; Acts i. 24.

confidence in the presence of God and of the Church. Afterwards another of the Bishops comes forward and calls on the individual by name.

7. Thus called upon, he presents himself, and is asked whether he acknowledges and admits this as being truly the call of God ? and whether he offers his services to God and the Church promptly and with a willing mind ?*

8. On expressing his assent, the duties of the office are read over to him from the Apostolic canon.

9. He then distinctly pledges himself to God and the Church, that he will discharge the duty faithfully, sincerely, and constantly.

10. The whole assembly fall on their knees and beseech God that He would ratify in heaven what is done in His name on earth, that He would bestow increase of gifts upon His servant, and fill him with the spirit of wisdom and power for so great a weight of cares.

11. The Bishops then ordain him with imposition of hands, and invocation of the name of God, while the congregation continue kneeling, and sing : "Come, Holy Ghost," &c.

12. The ordination being over, the Bishops present admit among them this their co-Bishop, by presenting to him the right hand of fellowship, and by a mutual embrace before the whole church ; but the Conseniors and ministers promise obedience by pledging the hand both for themselves and in the name of their absent brethren.

13. At length the assembly is dismissed, after singing a hymn with joy and thanksgiving.

* Isaiah vi. 8.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE ORDER OF THE MINISTRATIONS, OR THE FORM OF PUBLICLY PERFORMING CHURCH RITES.

Here will be stated the form used by us,

- I. Of preaching the word of God.
- II. Of administering baptism.
- III. Of receiving noviciates under pastoral care.
- IV. Of celebrating the Holy Communion.
- V. Of marrying.
- VI. Of burying.
- VII. Lastly, our customs regarding festivals, fasts, and alms.

I. THE ORDER REGARDING THE PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD.

Since it is evident, that the word of God is the principal part of the ministry, to which the sacraments are annexed only as seals,* the ministers of the Unity also bestow their principal care in teaching it, not only on Lord's-days and anniversary festivals, but also on week-days, and as often as an opportunity is afforded by occasion of a funeral, a marriage, or otherwise.

On *Lord's-days*, as being entirely set apart for divine worship, the people assemble four several times to hear

* Mark xvi. 15; 1 Cor. i. 17; Rom. iv. 11.

the word of God ; twice before noon and twice after. In the first meeting select passages from the *prophets* are explained ; in the second (which we term the *great service*) passages from the *Gospels* ; in the afternoon from the *apostolic writings* ; and in the evening the *Holy Bible* is read in order, accompanied with instructive remarks. In the summer season also, beginning at Easter, there is added a fifth meeting at noon ; when the youth are assembled, and for their benefit *catechetical instruction* is given in as popular a manner as possible, and they are also individually questioned. However, the parents and others likewise attend, both that they may return thanks to God after having taken refreshment, and that they may be present at the instruction of their children and domestics.

The mode of conducting our sacred assemblies is this. When the people are met, a hymn or sacred song is sung (in the *great service*, and at that in the afternoon also a psalm) ; then the preacher (after having prayed in the pulpit either with the people or only mentally), reads his text and explains it ; reference being always made to the *common place* of that week. For all the chief points of religion are so distributed for explication on the Lord's-days, as that they may be gone through annually : as is shown by the published index of such common-places, and of texts serving to elucidate them, and of sacred songs. The object for which this was prepared was to preserve unanimity throughout the congregations, not that it should be like a law, from which it is not allowed to deviate ; for the faithful pastor is at liberty, as often as he sees necessary, either

to choose for himself a text better suited to the place, time, persons, and occasions ; or prudently to digress from the ordinary texts to other points of instruction, dissuasion, or consolation. It is rather to be regarded as a law, that prolixity in preaching should be avoided, so to avoid weariness in the hearers. Hence it is ordered that the morning meeting should not last above an hour, including the singing ; so also as to that in the afternoon, and a meeting on a week-day. But in the great service an hour is allowed for unfolding the text from the Gospels. The meeting at noon and that in the evening are limited to half an hour each. Each sermon concludes with a prayer, followed by the blessing and singing. [22]

At the conclusion of the noon and afternoon service, the elder youths and girls remain, and are examined by the preacher (one of the elders assisting him with the former, and one of the matrons with the latter) to ascertain what attention they have paid that day in hearing the word of God, and how much each has retained. Moreover, during the Lent season, on Wednesday and Friday evening, meetings are held, termed *salva* (from the hymn *Salva nos Jesu, rex cœli*, “Save us, Jesus, heavenly King,”) in which the mystery of redemption is diligently inculcated, especially upon the young.

The manner adopted by us of preaching the word of God is simple, without the colouring of human eloquence, and chiefly in the terms of Scripture, *for the preserving of sound and unblamable doctrine, that every man may be presented perfect in Christ Jesus, in those things which*

*pertain to righteousness, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.** Hence our ancestors held separate addresses to the different classes, the beginners, the proficients, the perfect; also to the single, and again to the married by themselves: which practice it is evident was not without its advantage.

II. THE FORM OF BAPTISM.

We administer baptism according to the example of the primitive Church.

1. The children of believers, a few days after birth, are presented to be implanted in Christ and the Church by baptism.†

2. A portion of Scripture is read, since all things are sanctified by the word of God and by prayer, especially the sacraments.‡

3. It is shown that the covenant of grace extends also to the seed of believers.§

4. To this covenant the parents and sponsors assent in the name of the infant by a public profession of faith.||

5. At the inquiry of the minister, the parents take certain witnesses who have been invited to be present, as godfathers and godmothers, conferring on them the right of instructing their offspring in the Christian faith and religion, and in all that relates to the covenant entered into with God; and so also of admonishing and reproofing themselves, if they should be found

* 1 Cor. ii. 4; 1 Pet. iv. 11; Tit. i. 9, ii. 7; Col. i. 28; 2 Tim. iii. 17.

† Gen. xviii.; Mark x. 13, 14.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 5.

§ Gen. xvii. 19; Acts ii. 39.

|| Acts viii. 37.

negligent in the duty of training their children. The sponsors also in their turn give assurance of their promptitude in this matter, and bind themselves actively to discharge their duty towards the infant to be baptized, especially in case of the death of the parents.

6. Then all turning to God the Father, pray that the child may be cleansed from its native taint by the blood of Christ, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, receive the seal of this internal grace by baptism, and be chosen to the lot of the elect.

7. Prayers being ended, the minister, after giving the child a name according to the choice of the parents, baptizes it in conformity with Christ's command, *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, with simple and pure water.

8. An exhortation is then addressed to the parents and sponsors, that being mindful of their obligations, they may diligently continue to educate the child, until they can present him with credit before the church as being piously trained and well taught, and thus commend him to the pastoral care of the ministers. Lastly, the transaction is closed with prayer for the Divine blessing.

III. THE MODE OF RECEIVING NOVICIATES.

The pastoral care of our ministers extends only to those who, of their own free will, submit to the Unity and its order, and commit themselves to the care of the pastors; in accordance with the direction of the Apostle, "Feed the flock of God which is among you."*

* 1 Pet. v. 2.

Therefore, in order that the ministers may know the persons who are specially committed unto them, and may act with the greater boldness and faithfulness towards those who have entrusted themselves to their charge, the rite already used by the primitive Church on the admission of new persons has been revived with advantage among us : since the Apostles received such only as “first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to them by the will of God.”* But when receiving adults who come to us from other quarters, we use different rites from those which we observe on the admission of such, as having been born and baptized among us, have been instructed in the Christian religion.

As to the *adults*, we inquire : “Why they wish to “join us? whether they are fully convinced of the truth of “our doctrine, and of the utility of our order and “discipline?” If we find the individual properly acquainted with our doctrine and discipline, having a correct understanding of the essentials of salvation, and being of a blameless life, he is at once admitted ; if not, his reception is deferred that he may gain a better knowledge of us, and we of him.† These persons are not received publicly (except there be special reasons for it), but in private before the elders. They are moreover asked :

1. *Whether they promise obedience to God in this Church?* that is, doing all the will of God by virtue of the covenant of grace.

2. *Whether they are prepared to submit also to the*

* 2 Cor. viii. 5.

† 1 John iv. 1 ; Rom. xii. 2.

ministers of the Church, in the place of Christ? that is, giving them full power to teach, advise, reprove, and punish them, especially in case of gross misconduct.

3. *Whether they have made up their mind to suffer ignominy and persecution for Christ and his truth?* “since all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.”*

4. They are then admonished, *stedfastly to adhere to the truth they have acknowledged even unto death*: † and on pledging their hand in token of obedience (not to the minister as a man, but to Christ and His word), they receive permission to enter into sacred fellowship with the other believers, and to have recourse in all difficulties of conscience, with confidence, to their pastors.

But *young persons*, who have been instructed in the chief points of religion at home by their parents and sponsors, or by their teachers at school, are publicly committed to the care of their pastors in the church, before the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, most commonly at the time of a visitation by the Seniors, after this manner :

1. The words of Christ are read: “Come unto me, all ye that labour,” etc.‡ accompanied with a brief exposition.

2. The boys and girls to be confirmed, and who have already been repeatedly examined by the pastor, are placed in order in the middle of the church.

* 2 Tim. iii. 13; Acts xiv. 22. † Rev. ii. 10; Phil. iii. 16.

‡ Matt. xi. 28.

3. They are then asked if they are willing to renew the covenant made with God in baptism?*

4. On expressing their assent, the chief points of the covenant are explained, after the form prescribed by the Apostle, Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13, and they are desired openly, in the presence of the church, to renounce Satan, the world, the flesh, etc.

5. A profession of faith is required of them, on which they repeat the Apostles' creed, all together, and in an audible voice.

6. Then kneeling down, and repeating after the minister, they pray to God that He would forgive the sins of their youth, and strengthen them by his Holy Spirit to do all the good pleasure of his will: the same is also done by all the congregation supplicating on their behalf.

7. After prayer; a declaration of absolution is made to these new members, as also to the whole church, and of their privilege as children of God to partake at the table of the Lord.

8. Lastly, the apostolic rite of imposition of hands follows,† with the invocation of the Divine name over them, for the confirmation of their hope of Divine grace.‡ [23]

IV. THE FORM OF CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

We ordinarily celebrate the Lord's Supper four times a year, not that it may not be held more frequently;

* Deut. xxix. 10; Josh. xxiv. 22; Isa. xliv. 5.

† Matt. x. 16; Heb. vi. 2; Acts viii. 16, 17.

‡ The opinion of Erasmus, regarding this rite of confirmation, may be seen in the Preface to his Paraphrase of Matthew.

for such is the case when the advantage of believers calls for it; but as a general rule for the sake of unanimity. On the approach of the Communion especial care is taken to prepare for a worthy participation.

1. Two or three weeks previous, notice is given of this sacred rite, and all are admonished of their duty to "prove their own selves." A discourse is also delivered on the object, the dignity, and the use of this mystery, with various exhortations; and it is frequently alluded to in the discourses delivered during the intermediate time. Besides, during these days a careful inquiry and examination is instituted with reference to the state of consciences—after this manner :

Before notice is given of the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the pastor sends for the civil elders, and inquires "whether the Holy Communion can be appointed "for this or that time? or whether there are impediments in the way?" He then inquires into the life and conversation of the members, "whether any thing "of a scandalous nature has any where arisen? or "whether they think that any one requires reproof, "admonition, or instruction, regarding any matter?"* Accordingly therefore as it is settled, the pastor appoints the Communion, and institutes his examination of consciences. Every head of a family, with his domestics, waits on the pastor on the day and hour appointed, and they are there examined, as to "their "diligence in attending Divine worship publicly and "privately? whether they keep up daily prayers at "home, preceded by psalmody and the reading of the

* Heb. xii. 12, 13; 1 Cor. i. 11.

“ Scriptures ?” They are then questioned, especially the younger, “ how they understand this or that ? ” Then, regarding their conduct, “ whether they adorn “ the doctrine of our God by an honest conversation ? “ how the children obey their parents, and servants “ their masters ? ” In like manner the masters and mistresses of families ; “ whether they set a good ex-“ ample to their household ? whether they diligently “ train them in piety and good morals ? ” On which occasions opportunities readily occur of giving useful admonition, instruction, and warning. If any one is found to have misconducted himself, the privilege of coming to the Communion is not granted to him, unless he seriously promises a thorough amendment. But if he shows himself stubborn, he is altogether suspended and set aside ; until he yields an obedient neck to the yoke of Christ. This mode of procedure we learn from the example of the Apostles, and the power conferred by Christ on them and their successors.*

2. Before the celebration of the Lord’s Supper all are stirred up to spiritual hunger and thirst by the preaching of the Divine word.†

3. Then earnestly imploring the mercy of God in prayer, they seek the remission of their sins, and a worthy participation of the Lord’s table.

4. Afterwards, in the name of Christ, the forgiveness of sins. (absolution), and the right of the children of God is most solemnly declared to them in the name of the most Holy Trinity.†

* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6, 8.

† Acts xx. 7, 11.

‡ Acts xiii. 38, 39; 1 John ii. 12; 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

5. The minister recites the words of the New Testament, breaking the bread in the sight of the people, and taking the cup in his hand. He then adds a brief explanation of the words ; and having made a declaration of this mystery, according to the mind of Christ, he teaches them not to cleave to the elements, but to raise their hearts on high. At length, in the name of Christ he invites to the sacred feast all who are worthily prepared.

6. On this, with due reverence, they approach : first, the pastor, with the ministers of the church, as many as are present ; next the magistrates ; then the elders or presbyters of the church ; and lastly, the rest of the people, according to age ; as first the men, next the young men, and then the boys approach, with one or two elders to take care that no disorder may occur, or any stranger or profane person should rashly intrude. Afterwards the women draw near. When partaking of the holy supper we kneel, not from idolatrous superstition, but because the circumstances of the times have not permitted us to act otherwise, (for our ancestors, in the year 1494, had introduced the Communion standing, but were compelled to give it up by the fierce persecution which was excited on that account). Moreover, this very posture of kneeling being used by pious persons religiously, tends to deepen their devotion itself, and their humility before God, and thus the more incites them to “rejoice with trembling.” During this time the whole congregation join in praising God, in hymns treating of the passion of Christ, and its saving benefits.

7. Lastly, thanks are offered to God while the whole assembly again fall on their knees. An exhortation is delivered, inciting them to the pursuit of piety; and with the Divine benediction the assembly is dismissed in peace, testifying their gratitude by alms to the poor.

V. THE FORM OF MARRIAGE.

1. We advise and exhort those who intend to marry to do nothing in that respect without consulting their parents, relatives, and the pastor, who may unite with them in imploring of God a happy result.

2. We entirely prohibit clandestine engagements: discipline is enforced on those who are guilty of them.

3. The marriage ceremony is performed in public; when, after a passage of Scripture has been read, and useful admonitions on the marriage relation founded thereon, the parties are called forward before the congregation present, (who are to be the witnesses of these transactions), and are asked whether they freely and lawfully unite. Hereupon they mutually bind themselves to each other with the conjugal vow in an indissoluble bond of love and fidelity. The minister then taking their right hands, pronounces them lawful man and wife, and confirms this with the words of Christ, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder,"* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

4. Prayer is put up to God on behalf of the newly married pair.

5. The parties are encouraged with the hope of the

* Matt. xix. 5, 6.

Divine blessing, which is confirmed to them in the name of God: and all present are admonished to observe piety, modesty, and temperance in their feasting, avoiding drunkenness, buffoonery, dancing, and all other offensive things.

VI. THE FORM OF VISITING THE SICK, AND OF BURYING THE DEAD.

1. When any one of our people is seriously ill, he commands himself to the prayers of the church, which are offered up for him.*

2. Being visited by the minister,† he is reminded of the need of penitence according to the word of God,‡ and then is encouraged to exercise confidence in God's mercy and salvation. He is, moreover, admonished, that whatever it may please God to do with him he should be prepared for it,§ and should rest assured that after having lived in the faith of the Son of God, he will not pass from death to judgment, but into life eternal.

3. If he still wishes to be strengthened in spirit by partaking of the Eucharist, this is not refused him; yet some other persons are invited to join, that it may really be a communion of saints.

In conducting funerals a pious custom is observed, which is also in use elsewhere, namely, that the minister and the school-children accompany the faithful dead to the place of sepulture with singing, and then, in a funeral address, is set before those who

* James v. 14, 15.

† Matt. xxv. 36.

‡ Isa. xxxviii. 1.

§ Phil. i. 23.

are present what, out of the Word of God, may serve for instruction, for consolation, or for warning.

VII. CUSTOM REGARDING FESTIVAL DAYS.

Of all festivals we assign the chief dignity to the *seventh or Lord's day*, which, we consider, it is lawful for no one to employ in outward or servile works, under any pretext, even of Christian liberty, and for this reason, because we acknowledge the institution of it not as a ceremony, but as part of the moral law, for ever inviolable. For,

1. It was instituted before the written law, even from the very creation, and proclaimed, as it were, to all the world, and consecrated with a special blessing.*

2. Moreover, in the law we find the seventh day not among the ceremonial institutions, but in the very *Decalogue*, which was published, not by Moses, the promulgator of ceremonies and shadows, but by God himself from heaven, with the voice of majesty, and written by the finger of God on tables of stone.†

3. We do not find any precept so often repeated in the law and the prophets, and so strongly insisted on, as the precept respecting the Sabbath. It is not probable that God would have attached such weight to a ceremony, especially as he protested that he required not ceremonies.‡

4. On no occasion does God so often appeal to his own example as in this precept; namely, that because he himself rested from his work, even so should we rest.§

* Gen. ii. 3.

† Exod. xx. 8, 22; xxxi. 18.

‡ Ps. l. 8; Jer. vii. 22, 23.

§ Exod. xx. 11.

5. The anger of God against those who violate this commandment is so great that he will have them put to death; * on the other hand, to those who observe it, he promises the rewards of this life and of life eternal.†

6. Nor does God conceal the reason why he so earnestly desires this of his people: "For," saith he, "it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that I am Jehovah, who doth sanctify you."‡

7. Thus Christ, although Lord of the Sabbath,§ yet observed the Sabbath; not, indeed, in a pharisaic ceremonial way, but so that his custom was to teach the Word of God on Sabbath-days, and to perform works of mercy, as restoring the sick.|| In like manner the apostles, having transferred the glory of the Sabbath to the first day, carefully observed those days, by convening, for instance, their sacred assemblies, and celebrating religious services in them, so that they often continued their meetings till evening, and midnight,¶ and have designated it the *Lord's day*.**

We hallow the Lord's-day after this wise:

1. By resting from outward labour; for example, from carrying goods, from bearing burdens, and from those pursuits which relate to subsistence, to manufactures, and to trading, in order that the domestics and the cattle may enjoy a season of repose.†† But still more by shunning the works of the flesh, drunken-

* Exod. xxxi. 14; Numb. xv. 35. + Is. lvi. 2; lviii. 13, 14.

‡ Exod. xxxi. 13; Ezek. xx. 12. § Mark ii. 28.

|| Luke iv. 16, 17. ¶ 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Acts xx. 7—10.

** Rev. i. 10. †† Exod. xx. 10; Neh. xiii. 15.

ness, dancing, gaming, journeys of pleasure, and trifling; also avoiding nuptial festivities, fairs, and markets. It was also the custom, especially when under a magistrate who was patron of the Church, that on the Saturday preceding the Lord's-day, early before sun-set, all laid aside their secular employments, and with the approach of evening commenced the sanctification of the day dedicated to God.

2. By occupying ourselves with things spiritual and divine, singing hymns, for instance, and reading the Scriptures on the Saturday evening itself; and on the morning and during the whole of the Lord's-day, frequenting the public services, meditating on and attending to sacred things, not once only or twice, but as before mentioned, four or five times. For since God has set apart this day from the rest, and has claimed it for himself alone, as his own sacred day,* our ancestors thought it most suitable that the greater part of it should be spent in the common assembly of believers, and that this would be the means of avoiding unnecessary journeys, idleness, and other follies, which God prohibits on his holy day.† So also we disapprove of the revision of income, the making up of accounts of receipts and expenses, and demanding payment of debts; that all may rather be forgetful of the things of time, and learn to meditate on those which are eternal.‡

We also celebrate the memorial of the principal works of Christ on certain days; namely, his *Advent or Nativity*, his *Death, Resurrection, and Ascension*, the

* Exod. xx. 9, 10; Isa. lviii. 13. † Isa. lviii. 13. ‡ Heb iv. 9.

Sending of the Holy Spirit, also his Circumcision, Epiphany, and Transfiguration. We moreover celebrate the days of the *Apostles*, and of some *martyrs*; but these we regard with the same Christian liberty as others do, for the sole purpose of keeping alive their memory, and as an occasion of placing before our people examples of constancy and patience in the martyrs,* and of giving suitable admonition thereon. For as soon as the sermon and prayers are over, all return to their work as on other days.† [24]

RITES REGARDING PRAYER DAYS, OR DAYS OF PUBLIC AND SOLEMN SUPPLICATION.

Four times in the year, or once a quarter, we observe certain days, for the purpose of stirring up a penitential spirit in the people. At these seasons, on the Wednesday and Friday, the people being assembled, are diligently instructed out of the Word of God, according as the times may require. Confession of sin is then made, and the mercy of God, with depreciation of judgment, is implored: that God would grant peace; faithful labourers, and pious nursing fathers to the church, and would direct with the spirit of wisdom and counsel those whom he had given; that he would convert and raise up the fallen and the straying, and having compassion on unbelieving nations, would add them to his church. And since these are called by us days of penitence, the people are admonished to the exercise of true repentance, fasting, sobriety, and

* Heb. xiii. 7.

† Exod. xx. 9.

almsgiving ; * and that through the whole day they should be addressing their prayers and sighs to God in their houses ; and more especially at the several hours of noon, afternoon, and evening, each head of a family should be thus engaged with his household.

RITES OF FASTING.

1. We teach that fasting consists, not in the selection of food, but in abstinence from all eating and drinking, and also from sleep for a certain time, till evening at least, unless the health of any one cannot sustain it.

2.. We do not adopt this from a notion of merit, or as a part of divine worship, but as a means of mortifying the flesh, and of exciting humility and contrition for sin, and that the mind may be more calm for meditating on sacred things.†

3. We are accustomed to appoint such fasts,—

1st. On solemn prayer days, as already mentioned.

2nd. At the approach, or outbreak, of any danger from war, pestilence, or persecutions, even of a single congregation or person.

3rd. When ministers of the church are to be chosen and ordained at the Synods.

We are moreover encouraged in the observance of fasts of this kind by the exhortations, as well as by the examples furnished in Holy Writ.‡

ON ALMS.

1. The members bring these as voluntary oblations

* Matt. v. 44, 45; ix. 38 ; 2 Thess. iii. 1. † Zech. vii. 5 ; Is. lviii. 5.

‡ Joel ii. 12, 15 ; 2 Cor. vi. 5 ; Ps. xxxv. 13 ; Jonah iii. 8 ; Acts xiii. 3.

to the church treasury according as they think fit, for the benefit of the poor believers.*

2. But as every one is at liberty to do this whenever he pleases, general collections are usually made only on days of prayer and of fasting, and of the holy communion, and in case of some unusual necessity.†

3. These alms are expended and distributed among the poor, according to their individual necessities, whether by feeding and clothing them in the poor-houses, or otherwise rendering them help in sickness or old age.

4. Each congregation has its alms, by which it relieves its own poor; but if any congregation should be unable to do this adequately, it is assisted by other congregations, so that, according to the apostle's direction, "the abundance of some may supply the wants of others."‡

5. Nor does that only pass under the name of alms among us which is put into the treasury of the church, but also all works of mercy; that is, every service of humanity in the name of Christ, which a man discharges to his neighbour, by furnishing meat, drink, clothing, dwelling, medicine, and other necessaries of life.

6. To the exercise of this charity the people are excited by the doctrine of the Scriptures; which exhort and instruct us thereupon, and promise thereto the most ample rewards.§

* Luke xxi. 1.

† 2 Cor. xvi. 1.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 14.

§ Deut. xv. 7, 8; Prov. xix. 17; Matt. vi. 3, 4; Luke xiv. 12—14; Heb. xiii. 16.

CHAPTER IV.

CONCERNING THE DOMESTIC ORDER OF THE MINISTERS.

The pastors of the brethren, according to ancient custom, bring up under their roofs a number of youths of good parentage, and having previously been well educated, and who, there is reason to hope, will give their attention to the ministry. These they imbue with scriptural knowledge and piety, and train in good morals, modesty, and obedience. Sometimes they also employ them in external labours, as they do likewise the elder acoluths, deacons, and new ministers, as well for the purpose of avoiding sloth, as from the pressure of want.* These occupations proceed in regular order, so that there is a fixed hour for rising, for prayers, for engaging in study and labour, for dining, supping, and retiring to rest.† At the signal of the bell, all rise, and having washed and dressed, praise God on bended knees.‡ Then each betakes himself to reading and meditation on sacred things. About an hour after, a signal is again given, and now all the household meet, including the domestics; § when, after the singing of a psalm or hymn, a portion of Scripture is read and expounded, and useful remarks are deduced therefrom, and they are encouraged to praise God and to call upon him, either by the minister, or the one whose turn it is on that day, (for all

* 2 Kings vi. 1—4; 1 Cor. iv. 12. † Eccles. iii. 1. ‡ Ps. v. 3.

§ Ps. lxxxviii. 13; and cxix. 147, 148; Prov. viii. 34.

who are destined for the ministry are employed in these exercises, even the boys). Prayers being over, every one returns to his work, reading or writing, or committing to memory, or even hearing Latin lessons, where schools are kept. Some of these are afterwards sent out to foreign schools, at the expense of the parents or seniors, according as either necessity may require, or their own narrow means may admit. The afternoon, as being less suited to study, is usually spent in manual labour till supper time, excepting by such as are employed in teaching the young people of the place. Yet, at two in the afternoon, they again assemble to prayers, after the apostolic example,* and when these are over, all return again to their work. The time after supper is spent in practising music or psalmody. At length the evening prayers conclude the day, and each retires to rest; nor is any one allowed to sit up at night, much less to leave the house. Hence the house is closed in good time, and the keys are delivered either to the master or to the overseer for the following day. The time at dinner or supper is spent neither in silence nor in trifling conversation, but the boys recite from memory, either moral precepts, or the catechism, or hymns, or psalms, which they have been directed to learn; but the elder ones repeat some portion of the Scripture, in order. During the time that is left, a theological discussion is proposed, usually having reference to the Bible-lesson for that week, in explaining which every one tries his powers, beginning with the youngest and concluding

* Acts iii. 1.

with the pastor. Sometimes, also, instead of this question, something is directed to be read. They all have the domestic duties distributed among them, in order that all, from their youth up, may be accustomed to attention and to a sort of skill which is requisite for their fitly going through the duties of their vocation, and that no one may eat the bread of idleness. To the elder youths the more important duties are committed, to the younger such as are of less importance. The latter, for instance, have charge of the articles for washing, of laying the tables, sweeping the rooms, &c. ; the former of the house door, the cellar, the granary, the gardens, the clock, the library, and general cleanliness, so that no one may be left without exercising his attention for his own and the common benefit.

OFFICES HELD IN COMMON, BUT WHICH REQUIRE
REGULAR ARRANGEMENT, ARE TWOFOLD.

Some *domestic offices* are common to the ministers, deacons, and acoluths ; which one discharges one day, a second on the next, a third on the following, and so on to the last. You may call him an overseer, or guardian of order. His duties are, first, to give the signal for rising, with the bell ; 2nd, to light the lamp ; 3rd, to lead the singing before prayers ; 4th, to read the Scripture ; 5th, to deliver the exhortation ; 6th, to note if any one is absent from prayers or study ; 7th, to furnish a question for discourse at dinner (which is likewise to be understood as applying at supper and at evening prayers) ; 8th, lastly, at night to lock up the

house, and to deliver the keys to the pastor, or who-ever has charge of them.

There are other *offices of a public nature* belonging to those only who are employed in delivering addresses to the people, that is on week-days. This also is con-ducted in order, so that each may be able to prepare himself in good time, and all may gain proficiency in the gift of prophesying.* It also promotes this object, that whenever there are members in the vicinity who on account either of distance or illness cannot easily attend the common assembly, the pastor sends out deacons or acoluths (either every Lord's day, or at stated intervals) to declare the word of God to them. This is of advantage to both: to the people, who are by this means nowhere neglected, and to the candidates for the ministry, who are every where and constantly receiving improvement. Hence all are accustomed to apply themselves to the study of the dominical texts in good time, at least three days before. For on the Saturday, after morning-prayer, the pastor inquires of each, what he has thought upon the text of the morrow? They then state their ideas, first the acoluths, after-wards the others in succession. Finally, the pastor concludes, and points out what they all should chiefly have regard to, or what they should urge (according to the diversity of times and occasions), as also whither every one should go, and where he should teach.

All who have given their services to our fraternity, are also bound to submit themselves to the follow-ing regulations, in order to avoid various evil conse-

* Num. xi. 29; 1 Cor. xiv. 31.

quences ; that is, not to attempt any thing on their own judgment : as by going abroad (without the knowledge of the pastor or assistant), or by purchasing articles for their private use, or by sending anywhere letters of importance, or by giving up any part of their property to another person, or by taking the money of others in charge ; much less by lending themselves to the signing of contracts, wills, bonds, or, in a word, to any political transactions.

The juniors, that is, the boys and the acoluths, are examined every week in what they have done and learned, and how they have conducted themselves. Moreover a re-arangement is annually made of all the domestic duties, about the beginning of the year : not only because the inmates are often changed and transferred, as occasion requires, from one pastor to another ; but also, that there may be a renewal of good order, and that the love and observance of it, and a conscientious pursuit thereof, may be stirred up in all. At this time also, an account is usually given in of the author which each has studied during the year, and the profit thence derived ; and some new task is assigned for the following year.

Lastly, it is a rule of the Unity, that a pastor or assistant do not leave home without necessity, and, as far as practicable, without the consent of his senior ; and that when on a journey, he stop and lodge only at the houses of Brethren, unless there are none near. By them such guests are hospitably received, and are entertained according as their means allow. On the other hand, addresses delivered at family prayers,

or to the people from the pulpit, are the returns which the hosts receive ; and these serve to prove and to confirm their harmony in doctrine and in spirit, so that in this respect also the footsteps of the primitive church are followed.*

* *Acts xiii. 15.*

CHAPTER V.

CONCERNING THE DOMESTIC ORDER OF THE HEARERS.

The ministers of the Brethren do not confine the observance of order to themselves, but are also instrumental in inducing the people of their charge to follow the same in their own families. Namely,

1. That according as God hath called and placed each individual, whether as the father or mother of a family, or as free, or in service, so each should maintain his station in the fear of God.*

2. That all should allot time for divine worship, morning, noon, and evening, before and after meals; by praying to God, singing hymns, and reading the Scriptures.†

3. That they should not forsake the sacred assemblies, but diligently attend them, and bring their household with them.‡

4. That they should carefully instruct their children and domestics in religion, especially on the Lord's day, by diligently inquiring at dinner time and supper, how much each one has observed of what had been spoken at church.§

5. That the heads of families should be careful to set their households a good example, and lead them to imitate it.

6. Worldly diversions, drunkenness, dancing, swear-

* 1 Cor. vii. 20; Eph. iv. 1. † 1 Tim. ii. 1, and iv. 5; Deut. viii. 10.

‡ Heb. x. 25.

§ Eph. vi. 4.

ing, loose discourse, gambling, and the like, they should neither tolerate in their houses, nor allow elsewhere.

7. They should daily employ their servants and children in suitable work, and teach them to shun idleness as the poison of youth.

8. All should be most observant of piety, according to the moral law.

9. Fathers of families should not frequent taverns and public houses, nor spend their time in idleness, drinking, or playing, nor be absent from home at night ; but being occupied with their proper business, keep watch over their dependants.

10. They should avoid disreputable and suspicious modes of gaining a livelihood ; altogether abstain from interest and usury, on account of the threatenings of God against it, and the various iniquities concurring therewith.*

11. No one should hastily appeal to Courts of Law, but disputes which arise between those who are partakers of the faith should rather be amicably settled, either before the lay elders, or else by chosen arbitrators.

12. The custom was also observed by our ancestors, that members journeying from home on business, or such as were about to take up their residence in another place, made it known to their pastors, requested the prayers of the church, and received a testimonial to other pastors ; in order that if they should anywhere need advice, instruction, or assist-

* 1 Thess. iv. 6 ; Exod. xxii. 25 ; Ps. xv. 5.

ance, they might be the more surely credited. And, for the due maintenance of order, neither ought the members to betake themselves to the ministry of other pastors, nor pastors to minister to members of other congregations ; lest this irregular freedom should be abused to the serious injury of discipline.

The people, being accustomed to such goodly regulations, keep themselves, without reluctance, within these bounds ; and if any irregularity occurs, it is reduced to order by timely admonition.*

* 1 John iv. 6; 2 Cor. vii. 15; 1 Cor. xvi. 16; 2 Cor. ii. 9.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCERNING VISITATIONS.

It is certain that no order, however skilfully designed, can endure without careful supervision.* For this end it is that the teacher often inspects his scholars, the master his workmen, the general his soldiers ; since it is impossible that men should be held to their duty, without exhortations and cautions. And on this account there has been introduced into the Unity of the Brethren not only the inspection of the members exercised by the pastors, as already mentioned, but an inspection of the pastors themselves, and of all the congregations by the Bishops ; and this after the example of the Apostles, who visited and confirmed the churches which they had founded.†

Regarding the visitations of the congregations, we have therefore to state,

1. When they usually take place.
2. By whom they are conducted.
3. What are the proceedings of the visitors.

1. The visitations are so arranged that every congregation may be visited once a year, which usually takes place in the spring, summer, or autumn ; but in winter also, if the necessity of the case demands it, as when a pastor is to be presented to a congregation, or some scandal requires to be checked. If there be not visitors enough for all the congregations during

* Eph. iv. 6 ; Heb. xii. 13.

† Acts xiv. 21, 22 ; xv. 36, 41.

the same year, those which appear to have less need of visitation are deferred to the following year.

2. The charge devolves properly on the Bishops, that each visit the congregations in his diocese, in company with the conseniors, his colleagues. But if he is prevented by lawful impediments, he sends his conseniors, after the apostolic example.* One or two of the neighbouring pastors also are usually associated in the visitation, to create greater confidence in the people, who are thus witnesses of the unanimity of their pastors in regard to all that is done. The pastor to whom a visitation is intended receives timely notice.

3. Some duties of the visitors are *ordinary*, others *extraordinary*.

Those of an *ordinary* kind are either transacted *privately* with certain individuals, or *publicly* in full assembly as soon as the visitors reach the place, or before Saturday noon.

1. They make inquiry of the pastor himself in private, as to the state of his congregation? and what there is which chiefly requires attending to? They then inquire regarding *himself*, whether he be “a faithful servant,” and “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed?”† whether he “gives attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine?”‡ whether he sets a pious example?§ Next, in what manner he maintains himself? in what manner he brings up the *alumni* of the Unity? how each of them conducts himself? what obedience he pays? what proficiency he

* 1 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

† 1 Tim. iv. 13.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 15.

§ 1 Tim. iv. 12.

makes? Afterwards regarding the *people*; whether the flock is increasing or decreasing, (when they require to inspect the catalogue); whether he has any scandalous persons among them, to whom some means of correction should be applied? in what manner the lay elders, male and female, and the almoners perform their duties?

2. The assistants of the pastor and the alumni are sent for (the ministers, deacons, and acoluths), and are asked whether they continue firm in the purpose of their dedication? what progress they are making in piety? whether they cultivate concord and brotherly love?* in what manner they are treated by the pastor? whether they suffer any serious want? how much time is allowed them for study? and how they employ it? what each has done during this time? (Sometimes also works are furnished by the visitors for the reading of the pastor, as well as of the family under his care; hence it is made a subject of inquiry whether this has been done, and with what benefit; and some other task is prescribed to be read, written on, and gone through.)

3. Then the *lay elders* are called up, of whom, after a salutation has been delivered to them in the name of the absent seniors and the churches, inquiry is made regarding the pastor: In what manner he discharges his office? whether he edifies the flock in word and deed? whether any offence has arisen either through him or any member of his household? in short, whether they have any thing to mention, which the

* Col. iv. 8.

interest of the congregation requires to be publicly taken in hand ?

4. The female elders also are sent for and spoken with, as to the manner in which they discharge their office in attending to the younger sisters ? whether there exist among any of them hatred, envyings, disagreements, evil speaking, extravagance in dress, &c. ?

5. The inventories also of the furniture of the minister's house are usually examined in company with the ædiles and the lay elders ; and the buildings likewise, whether any thing is allowed to go to ruin ?

6. When the magistrate is of the same faith as the congregation, the visitors wait upon him also, and ascertain if he is satisfied with his pastor ?

The *public* duties of the visitors in the church are :

1. By preaching the word of God, to kindle fervent love to God.

2. By the administration of the Lord's Supper to confirm all in the faith and love of Christ.

3. By various exhortations, adapted to existing circumstances, to excite them to the ready discharge of their duties hereafter.

Extraordinary labours of the visitors occur only occasionally, and are : either the *reconciliation of parties at variance*, which the pastor was not able to effect (as if, for example, a dispute should arise between the congregation and the pastor or the magistrate) ; or the *initiation of a new minister* (concerning which ceremony, vide supra), or the *introduction of a new pastor*, or the *ordination of lay elders* ; or lastly, the *dedication of a new church*.

I. THE ORDINATION OF LAY ELDERS.

When the ordination of elders is needful, it is performed in the following manner: All the men are directed to assemble early before the evening meeting, when, after some words of advice from the visitors, they freely elect to the office, those whom they consider worthy. Those, therefore, who are marked out by plurality of votes, are called forward by the visitor after the evening meeting, and the duties of this office are read to them in the hearing of the whole assembly; when they promise fidelity and diligence to the Antis-tites of the Unity, the pastor, and their congregation, both bymaking a declaration to that effect, and by giving their hand in token. And that they may be able to discharge their office of overseers also in church, they are accommodated with special seats, for the more convenient oversight of the congregation.

Similar is the proceeding, when the female elders are elected, except that it takes place in presence of the women only.

II. DEDICATION OF A CHURCH.

The *dedication* or *consecration* of churches, is conducted amongst us in the following manner:

1. The congregation being assembled, a hymn is sung, when the visitor declares for what purpose this house has been erected ; viz., that it may be a *Bethel*, “a house of God, and a gate of heaven ;”* and therefore that it is now to be given up and consecrated to that use.

* Gen. xxviii. 17, 19; Isa. lvi. 7; Luke xix. 46.

2. He reminds them that the one, only, perfect Sanctifier of all things is God, who says: "I am Jehovah that doth sanctify you;”* and concerning the tabernacle raised by Moses, "I will sanctify the tabernacle," and "it shall be sanctified by my glory;"† and to Solomon, regarding the temple when built, "I have heard thy prayer, and I have hallowed this house to put my name there."‡ Therefore he exhorts that they should all now direct their eyes to God, and most humbly pray, that he would put his name here.§

3. The whole assembly then fall upon their knees, and in a prayer, in imitation of that of Solomon,|| fervently call upon God.

4. An admonitory address is delivered, with a solemn charge, that this sacred place be used for no other purposes than holding their sacred assemblies, and for the sacred worship of the most holy God in the presence of the elect angels.

5. And since all things are "sanctified by the word of God and prayer,"¶ the preaching of the Divine word follows, and then the holy communion.

6. Finally, the name of God is again invoked, and the solemnity is concluded by prayer for the divine blessing to rest on all who shall in this place wait upon God with an upright heart.

* Exod. xxxi. 18. † Exod. xxix. 43, 44. ‡ 1 Kings ix. 3.

§ Deut. xii. 5, 11. || 1 Kings viii. ¶ 1 Tim. iv. 5.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE ORDER AND DEGREES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

IT has been stated in what manner the custody of order is upheld in the Unity, by various kinds of inspection; moreover, reason tells us that it is not enough for a gardener to notice his plants, or the teacher his scholars, or the master his workmen, but that the first must prune away suckers, the second correct faults, the last reprove and punish the indolent. Hence *church discipline* is necessary, by which the irregular may be corrected, the disobedient put to shame, the obstinate punished, and finally, that corrupt and offensive members may be cut off and cast away. Thus, Christ says, "Salt is good. Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another;*" also, "if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault;"† also, "if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee."‡ And the Apostle bears witness that discipline is the test of the children of God: "If ye endure discipline," (says he) "God dealeth with you as with sons. But if ye be without discipline whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."§

For these reasons from the very commencement of our Unity all who have entered into this holy fellow-

* Mark ix. 50. † Matt. xviii. 15. ‡ v. 8. § Heb. xii. 7, 8.

ship of faith and charity have submitted to this divine and most salutary institution, even *discipline*: the highest and the lowest, the seniors and conseniors, the ministers and the assistants; all the members, noble and of the commonalty, even the magistrates themselves. They regarded it as a preventive of sin, to know that there were those watching their life and conversation, who had authority to warn and recall them from a perilous course.* Hence, up to this time, *all* in the Unity are subject to discipline, from the child to the old man, from the subject to the civil ruler, from the acoluth to the bishop; and this, both for their own benefit and that of others. For a man, whoever he may be, is liable to fall.† But that he may not continue in this lapsed state, and thus languish, die, and perish, a remedy, even discipline is provided, as we have seen, by Christ, the chief Physician of souls; and when it is carefully administered, it is of advantage, not only to him who is the subject of it, but also to others. Hence the Apostle: “them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”‡

The degrees of discipline, agreeably to Christ’s direction,§ are three:

1. *Private admonition or reproof.*
2. *Public reproof and exposure.*
3. *Excommunication and entire exclusion from the church.*

1. In the first place, all are here taught that this

* Ps. cxix. 71; cxli. 5; 2 Cor. 8—10. † Prov. xxiv. 16; James iii. 2.

‡ 1 Tim. v. 20.

§ Matt. xviii. 15.

right is conceded by Christ, nay, is enjoined as a law, *that each one should exercise a care over his brother, and if he sees him commit a fault, he should admonish him of his error in a brotherly spirit.** Hence they advise that a brother should venture to admonish a brother, and a sister a sister, more especially the senior his junior. But if any one should pay no attention to such admonition, some one else of greater authority must be called in, who may take up the matter with the individual, in the spirit of kindness, which office belongs especially to any one of the lay elders, or to the pastor himself.

2. CONCERNING THE MILD PUBLIC DISCIPLINE.

If no amendment follows, he is brought before the lay elders, and is repeatedly admonished to acknowledge and forsake his sin. If he yields, he is dismissed with admonition and encouragement; but if he continues refractory, his conscience is bound with the power of the keys, and he is suspended from the communion of the Holy Supper, until he returns to himself and amends his conduct.

Such is the mode of proceeding in lighter cases; but in cases of more serious and public transgression, it is different. For the guilty person is summoned before the pastor and lay elders, as often as is necessary, and his sin is fully set before him. If he acknowledges its guilt, and is filled with real shame and sorrow, he is encouraged with the hope of pardon; † yet, on certain conditions, namely,—

* 1 Thess. v. 11; Heb. iii. 13.

† Acts iii. 17—19.

First, that he exercise himself for some time in true penitence, calling upon God to forgive him his sin, crucifying his flesh, and exhibiting a real amendment of life. This exercise is continued either till the next communion, or still longer, according as the fruits of penitence are perceptible; while the congregation, during this time, neglects not to offer up prayers to God on behalf of the fallen.

Secondly, that he afterwards make satisfaction to the congregation which he had grieved, by publicly asking pardon of all who had been offended, either doing this himself or through the minister, and thus reconcile himself to it. But if his sin is not at all publicly known, his asking pardon before the lay elders is sufficient. All which regulations have this object in view, that the convinced sinner may be brought to a more thorough repentance, and to a more cautious conduct hereafter, while the rest may learn wisdom through another's experience.*

3. OF THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF THE INCORRIGIBLE.

If the crime is of a very flagitious nature, or the guilty party shows contumacy instead of penitence, recourse is had to the extreme power of the keys, *excommunication*, which Christ and the apostles direct to be used in the church.† By this the sinner is totally excluded from the communion of the saints, and is delivered unto Satan, unless he repents. The excommunication is publicly pronounced, and all the people, in order to put, as it were, their seal to what has been

* 1 Tim. v. 20.

† Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 5, &c.

done in the name of Christ, exclaim *Amen*; not without the sighs and tears of the pious. These obstinate sinners being excommunicated, are accounted as publicans and heathen, as Christ has commanded. Yet the hope of grace is not denied to any one, if by sincere repentance he is willing to return from the way of damnation into that of salvation. And if they perceive that the grace of repentance is given to any one, they rejoice; and after sufficient probation of the sincerity of his repentance, they again publicly receive him, to the joy of the whole congregation.* And thus they administer *the second part of the keys*, by opening heaven to the penitent.

This ecclesiastical discipline, in all its degrees, is enforced neither in a hypocritical, nor in a violent and tyrannical manner, but, as the Apostle has advised,† “in the spirit of meekness,” and with deep compassion,‡ “in the name and authority of Christ,” § “to edification, and not to destruction.” || It is enforced on delinquents, but removed from penitents.

THE CONCLUSION.

These, then, are the rites of our ecclesiastical order; which, as being derived from the word of God, our ancestors adopted, and have observed now for two centuries, in much persecution and suffering, but to their own great profit and that of the people of God;

* 2 Cor. ii. 7.

† Gal. vi. 1.

‡ 2 Cor. ii. 4—7.

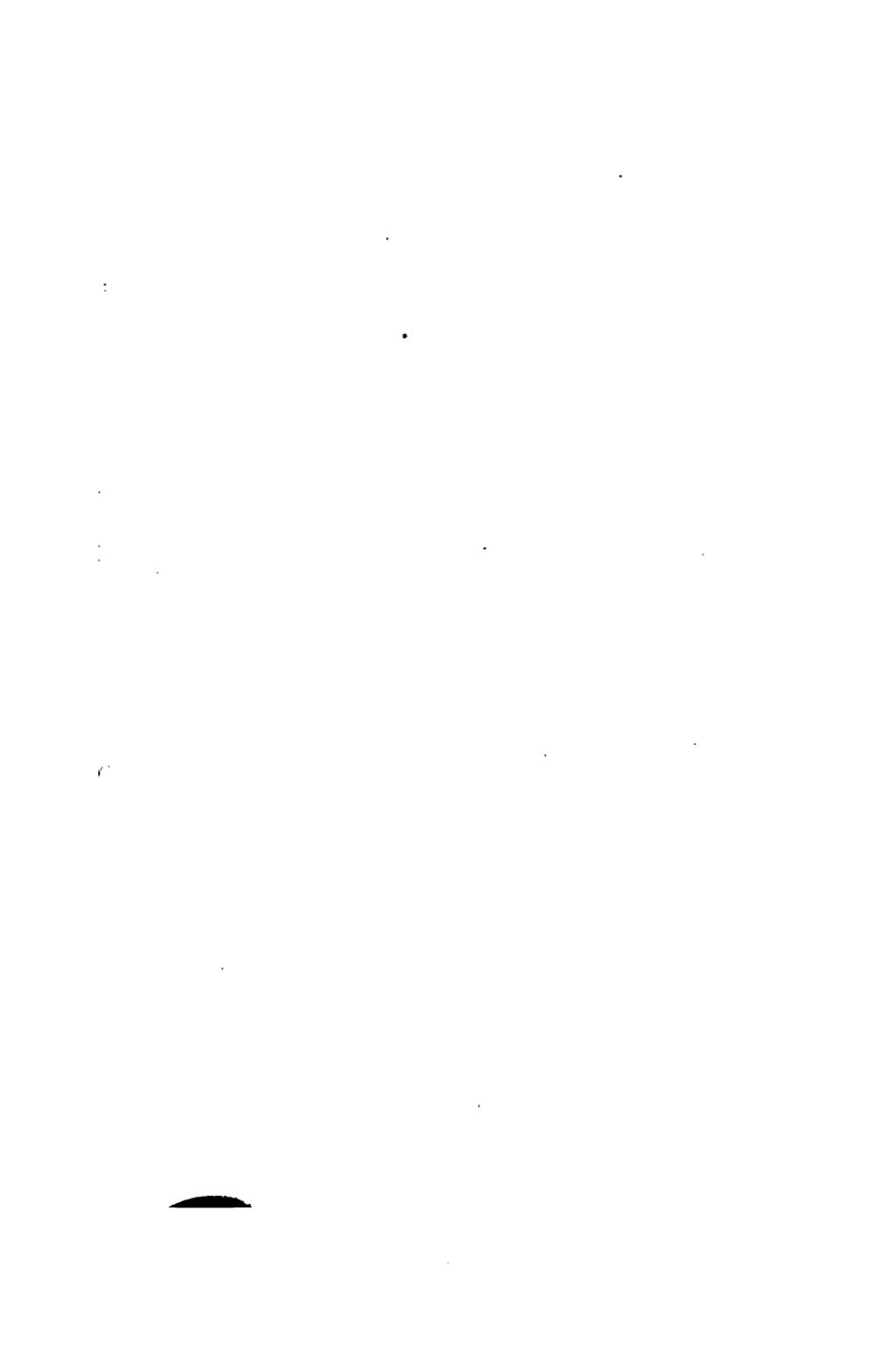
§ 1 Cor. v. 4.

|| 2 Cor. x. 4—6; and xiii. 10.

and in like manner we, since we have hitherto discovered nothing that is more conducive to our edification, endeavour, with the help of God, to observe them. If any other churches are pleased to adopt the same plan of order, or a similar one, we are not disposed to grudge, but rather to commend them ; only let the apostolic maxim be attended to : "Let all things be done decently, and in order."*

May our merciful God establish, strengthen, and perfect that sacred order of things which is pleasing to himself, both among us and everywhere throughout Christendom, to the wholesome edification of His church, and the praise of His name ! Amen.

* 1 Cor xiv. 40.



NOTES.



NOTES.

N.B. To the Notes taken from the "Annotations" of Comenius, his *name* alone is attached.

NOTE [1] to page 99.

Order.—Comenius quotes Origen and Chrysostom on the importance of order, and then adds: "Why give more quotations? There are none of the ancients who do not speak in praise of order. It is plain that any particular church is the less liable to be broken up the more order it has within it, although it be weak enough in other points; as may be seen in the Greek and Roman churches. It is therefore a matter of astonishment that some persons in our time, on account of the abuse of order, have come to dislike order itself, and wish to have its bonds removed, and to try this in their churches. Certainly with no better reasons than if a person should desire to remove the props and pillars of some large house, in order that they might not assume conspicuous positions in comparison with the timber or walls."—*Comenius.*

NOTE [2] to page 99.

"No individual was the founder of our church, but many pious men acting together. For Huss had been removed; and as to Rokyzan, they were not able to induce him to add his authority to a secession from the prevailing confusions, although he had recommended it. They, therefore, acted on the Apostle's injunction, 'endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that there may be one body, etc.' Eph. ii. 3, 4; and adopting their title solely from

the sacred motive, that they might give the name of *Fraternal Unity* to this their gathering in the *Unity of the Spirit*.”—*Comenius*.

NOTE [3] to page 103.

“No one can doubt that apostolic traditions are the purest fountains, and the customs of the primitive church the nearest streams from them. No one, therefore, ought to doubt that those things which have crept in since the Apostles should be reduced to these rules, and that the better things are nearer the fountains.”—*Comenius*.

In their “Apologia,” the Brethren speak of their adherence to the following three canons, which Rokyzan had borrowed from Huss, and had often repeated, although he declined to act upon them: “There are three things,” said he, “on which the whole existence of a pure Gospel depends: first, and before all things, the holy Scriptures; next, the example of the Lord Christ; lastly, the vestiges of the primitive church, after which all should strive who are desirous of their own salvation.”—*Lydii Waldensia*, p. 116.

NOTE [4] to page 105.

“In this life no one is perfect, yet all ought to aim at perfection, according to the direction of Christ: ‘Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,’ (Matt. v. 48), and other like exhortations often occurring in Scripture. Hence the Apostles termed those hearers *perfect*, who had advanced far beyond the rest (1 Cor. ii. 6, and xiv. 20; Phil. iii. 15; Heb. v. 14, etc.), and there is no temerity in imitating their aim and style.”—*Comenius*.

NOTE [5] to page 106.

“Other reformed churches also have their civil Seniors, men who assist the pastors in the preservation of church

discipline ; but the employment of matrons for this purpose has obtained only among the Brethren. This, as the places cited show, was in imitation of the apostolic churches, and experience has proved its value. Grotius remarks, that in the ancient church there were matrons, who encouraged the other women to a virtuous life, and whom they termed *πρεσβύτιδες*, and because they sat before the other women in the churches, *προκαθημέναι*. The eleventh canon of Laodicea set them aside, for they had continued up to that time, as Balsamon observes. But why set aside ? For what abuse ? We have seen none among us. Whatever serves for edification ought to be restored."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [6] to page 109.

"The juniors among us were trained with peculiar care to render prompt obedience to all the commands of their superiors, in order that being accustomed to live according to the will of another rather than their own, they might the more readily understand the fundamental principle of Christianity,—abnegation of self,—and might become the better qualified for hereafter directing others. For he knows not how to govern, who has not learned how to obey."

Acoluths ('Ακολεθοι). "Every pastor was required to have under his roof, and to board and train, one or two youths of good disposition and abilities, with the consent (more frequently at the urgent request) of the parents. When the antistites came round on their visitation, they either confirmed these youths in their purpose and transferred them to their own care, for the better opportunity of improvement, or if any one did not appear suitable for the work, they sent him away. For the antistites could sustain these alumni of the church in greater numbers, and aid

them with greater means in the prosecution of their studies."

—*Comenius.*

"When a youth has given sure indications of his suitableness, and deliberately and of his own accord (*liberrimè*) chooses a function so useful, yet of all the most difficult to discharge, and is eager to dedicate and consecrate himself entirely to it, we first of all receive him into the order of the sub-diaconate. This we do also after the example of the primitive church, which it is certain observed this order and custom, in selecting and constituting ministers, and when so constituted committed to them these most sacred functions."—*Apologia*, A.D. 1538, *Lydii Waldensia*, p. 199.

Dr. Buddeus, in the Preface to his Edition of the "Ratio," has the following observations on the arrangement regarding *Acoluths* :—"I am particularly pleased with the placing of youths intended for the service of the church under the domestic discipline of pastors, that they might not only be trained by them in learning, but in conduct befitting the teacher or head of a congregation. These they called *Acoluths*, who both had certain duties in the church, and were always present at the more important functions of the pastors, and so were gradually trained for the pious and prudent discharge of them. With us the students of theology are indeed furnished with learning, but preparation for ecclesiastical functions is generally passed over in silence; or if precepts are delivered in theological schools, they commonly go off in mere speculations, and are of little use as regards practice. And no wonder. For most of those who teach theology never had the charge of a church, nor ever felt what it is to have the care of souls; and what they have derived from books or from what others say, they inculcate with much confidence on their pupils. But as a politician, a soldier, or a merchant deserves credit for practical skill in politics, war, or mercantile affairs, not

according to the books he has read, but according as he shows his qualifications in action, so I regard as worthy of the name of theologian and of the office of pastor, not the man who has pored over many works on pastoral theology, or many compendiums of moral theology, but who, having first experienced in himself what it is to be a true Christian, has afterwards been an attendant on wise and faithful pastors in the discharge of their functions, whether when the rude are to be admonished, or the tempted lifted up, or the afflicted consoled, or the wandering brought back, and has learned by practice to discharge these duties with prudence and propriety. Such was the object of this truly excellent institution of the Brethren."

NOTE [7] to page 112.

"There were ordinarily two Bishops in Bohemia, two in Moravia, and one (sometimes two) in Poland."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [8] to page 116.

"Lasitius remarks on our custom in regard to the publishing of books, c. 22:—'Nothing appeared except it was first examined by persons selected for this purpose from the seniors and ministers; and for this reason, because the things which several sensible men had thoroughly considered, were the more reliable. Nothing would be there that was false, to mislead the reader, nothing that was violent to offend him.' To this I add, that we have not been wont to occupy ourselves with polemical writing. Partly, because it did not comport with our simplicity to engage in disputes, and partly because little advantage was seen of this practice in others, but rather the most palpable damage. For what tragedies has not this rage for disputation occasioned! And with what result? Discords have not been put down,

but increased ; matters of strife have not been lessened, but subdivided into the most minute minutiae, so that there is no numbering the questions and sub-questions. But when will that saying of Hilary be found attended to, ‘ God does not call us to heaven through subtle questions ? ’ And I wish they had not, among these subtleties, been forgetful of that which in the work of faith is of first importance, mutual *charity* and *meekness*, which Christ commanded us to learn of him, promising therewith rest for the soul, Matt. xi. 29. But our times have seen strange things ; how men, professing evangelical truth, have acted towards each other in a way contrary to evangelical meekness, and into how many bitter factions they have split. Hence ours would neither be leaders nor followers of parties ; thinking it better to aim at being good than learned ; and, as Seneca says, ‘ content with that more rustic title,’ rather to promote the conservation of peace, concord, and order among themselves, than to attack others.

“ They, indeed, wrote *Apologies* in defence of the truth of their doctrine, and the blamelessness of their life, yet without invectives against others, and only with a view of procuring peace. Nor always when they were attacked, sometimes taking silence as a shield ; nay, even some apologies were suppressed after being printed, and of such I have in my possession more than one, of solid character. But when they had to do with an insolent antagonist, who could abuse, but had not the power to hurt, they preferred to punish his insolence with silence, and to let his quarrelsome sheets become food for the moths.”—*Comenius*.

NOTE [9] to page 116.

“ Jerome says, ‘ It was universally decided, that, for the removing of schisms and dissensions, one should be chosen from the presbyters to preside over the rest. But if the dis-

trict round a city was so large, and the number of pastors so great that the Bishop could not attend to all the duties, *chorepiscopi* were appointed to officiate for the Bishop in minor affairs.' Nothing, therefore, was done by our people, even in this matter, without the warrant of antiquity."—*Comenius*.

It is worthy of notice, that Æneas Silvius (afterwards Pope Pius II.) in his letter to Cardinal Carvaial, giving an account of his visit to Tabor, and of the disputation he held with some of the Taborite ministers, refers to this statement of Jerome in support of his argument, that the church has power to make new regulations for itself: "Sic prelati, presbyteri, episcopi, quos olim Hieronymus æqualis fuisse potestatis affirmat."

After giving from Comenius the narrative of the consecration of Bishops of the Brethren by the Waldenses, Jablonsky remarks on the moderation of their views regarding Episcopacy. "From this account of the transaction," says he, "the prudence and moderation of this new Bohemian Church shine forth; for, without finding fault with any other on the mode of church order and policy, it adopted that which appeared most conformed to primitive times, condemning no other, yet preferring the most ancient. For it had in view not only what might be done legitimately, but also with the greatest safety; and, it carefully guarded, lest, while separating from the *Romish* church, it might seem to have left the *Catholic* church. It is of the same mind to this day; and although but few instances have occurred, when the Unity of the Brethren, which was furnished with its own nursery (seminarium), and this sufficiently stocked, has employed pastors of foreign ordination, yet there have been some such instances, where she kindly received into her bosom and set over her congregations presbyters of foreign ordination, driven to her by

persecution or exile. This also took place in the Anglican Church up to the year 1661, when *re-ordination* was required by Act of Parliament."—Letter to Archb. Wake, §. 10.

NOTE [10] to page 117.

"The rule prohibiting the divulging of conferential matters was strictly enforced, being needful for the maintenance of respect for its decisions, and to prevent the inconveniences arising from gossiping; so that persons have been removed from the conference for having prematurely made known its plans."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [11] to page 118.

"The place for holding the Synod was fixed upon by the Bishops; whereupon he, in whose diocese it was, informed the pastor of the place, and told him in what manner the things required were to be provided. The other pastors were invited only a few days before, and enjoined to silence."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [12] to page 119.

"The Seniors stopped at the house of the pastor, the rest with pious citizens in the vicinity; who received them with joy as angels of God."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [13] to page 119.

"Propositions are presented by the Seniors to the pastors for their consideration; and they are also themselves advised to collect matters for deliberation, and present proposals respecting them to the Seniors. That this may not be done confusedly, they elect out of their number a president and a secretary. The deacons and acoluths are not admitted to their councils; but lest meantime they should

be idle or roam abroad, some work is given them for reading, on which they are afterwards examined. Some one is also appointed by the Seniors to direct them and keep order."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [14] to page 119.

Synods.—“Something should be said on the order of asking and delivering the opinions of the members, and of thence forming the conclusions, in order that we may remark in these respects also the traces of good order, alike in the assembly of the pastors and of the Seniors.

1. The president moves that the business for which they are met should be commenced, in the first place by collecting the propositions ; that they may have in view from the beginning the points calling for deliberation.

2. These being collected, some one announces the heads of the subjects, giving explanations of them, if required, when that which demands attention is fixed upon, and that which is less pressing is set aside for consideration hereafter.

3. The former are first taken in hand for discussion, all the members being asked their opinions in order ; so that each may open his mind in as few words as he can, and support it with reasons.

4. The opinions are delivered in order, proceeding from the younger to the elder, not the contrary, so that the president speaks last. And experience has proved that this order is more suitable than if it should take place otherwise. For when the leading men give their opinions first, it is scarcely possible to secure freedom from prejudice, and that the questions be properly considered by all. For the younger men, after having heard the sentiments of their seniors, are either influenced by the idea of their wisdom, and do not narrowly scrutinize the matter ; or,

although entertaining a different opinion, are hindered by a feeling of modesty from stating what they think, out of deference to the authority of their elders. On the other hand, should a young man advance something of importance, which had not occurred to the minds of his seniors, there is a two-fold disadvantage; for the seniors may feel it unbecoming to retract their opinions; or, if the suggestion be adopted, it places a dangerous snare in the way of the young men. These disadvantages are avoided by our practice. For while the juniors know that they are to state what they think, they get a habit of reflection, and of engaging in business with attention and reverence, and with silent prayer to God, and each is at liberty freely to utter what he thinks. The elders, on the other hand, can take up and improve whatever has been advanced to the purpose, while at the same time their own authority remains unchallenged.

To prevent the discussions from wandering, no one is allowed to speak on any other subject than the one in hand, until it is brought to a conclusion. Nor is a speaker allowed to be interrupted, unless he be too diffuse, or speak with bitterness, when he is checked by the president.

The secretary notes down the judgments of all, and the arguments by which they are supported, adding also his own, if he differs in any respect from the rest.

Lastly, the president sums up, weighing the different opinions, whether they tend to the same point or go in opposite directions, and whether they can be reconciled. If they can, he shows how one common conclusion may be arrived at, so that all the reasons adduced hold good. If they cannot, he points out the two results, and explains the reasons that make for each. In case the matter be of great importance, he presents it for renewed discussion, as

to the reasons which may be thought to preponderate, and the manner in which disadvantages may be warded off.

Therefore every one is again permitted to speak freely, yet in order and in few words, and by comparing the different reasons together, to reduce the points of difficulty, until each is content. Then the conclusions, as being common to all, are inserted in a book. The effect of this rational proceeding is, that all can see the mind of the whole Church, can speak of matters as with one mouth, and can act with unanimity.”—*Comenius*.

NOTE [15] to page 121.

Comenius quotes the following from the Minutes of an old Synod :

“ It had been observed that some brethren, with a view to appear gentlemanly, had got into habits of facetiousness. This must be amended.

“ The Apostle forbids jesting to all Christians, and much more should it be shunned by the teachers themselves. ‘Trifles,’ says Chrysostom, ‘ are trifles in the mouth of a layman, but blasphemies in the mouth of a priest.’

“ The frequenting of fairs and banquets is prohibited.

“ Ministers should not meddle with political matters, nor in making matrimonial matches; nor practise medicine.

“ A pastor should not possess more than 200 thalers; what he has above this sum, he should give to pious uses and to the poor.

“ All should avoid the pomp of titles, being satisfied with the lovely appellation of Brethren.

“ No one should interfere with his advice in the drawing up of wills, but every one should have his own will ready.”

In a Letter of the Brethren to Doctor Augustinus, A.D. 1508, who had, among other things, ridiculed the poverty of their ministers, and their having to labour for their subsist-

ence, they say : “ We will briefly remark, let him consider the commencement of the primitive church, whether there were many of the noble, powerful, wise, or rich, in these offices, and what sort of living they had, and this ought to shut his mouth. We are not ashamed of our priests because they labour according to their ability with their own hands to procure their food ; for both apostolic teaching and example so lead us, and indeed we would rather see this, than that, giving away to indolence, they should frequent taverns, and follow vanity and vice.”—*Fasciculus Rerum Expetendarum et Fugiendarum*, fol. 88.

NOTE [16] to page 124.

“ This intimate examination of the conscience was very strict, in imitation of the Prince of pastors, when examining Peter: John xxi. 15, &c. Thus an occasion was given to the candidate for the ministry of thoroughly proving himself, whether he proposed to follow Christ from pure love or for a livelihood ? John vi. 26. Whether he sought the flock, or the fleece ? Whether he was ready to impart to his hearers not the Gospel of God only, but his own soul also ? 1 Thess. ii. 8. This last trial of the conscience was sometimes so affectingly conducted, that instances are not wanting of persons having shrunk from the office through alarm of conscience, or their age or inexperience ; feeling more disposed to work out their own salvation, than to be engaged in caring for that of others. In the last place, they are encouraged with the Divine promises, and enter upon their high vocation with fear and trembling.”—*Comenius*.

NOTE [17] to page 126.

“ The form of the testimonial is after this manner :— ‘ Venerable brother in Christ, the Bishop, we bear witness before God and this church, that these men are of worthy

parentage and education, and that their lives have hitherto been honest and unblameable ; also, that having been examined by us, they have been found to be sound in doctrine and faith, and of a sincere intention to serve Christ and the church. We therefore request, in the name of the congregations they are to serve, that you would confer on them the pastoral office, by the power committed to you by Christ and the church, and that you would confirm them in the same.' The Ordainer replies : ' This testimony of yours, given in the presence of the church of Christ, is admitted ; and your petition shall be granted in the name of God.' "—*Comenius.*

NOTE [18] to page 126.

" Between this engagement on the part of the candidates and the subsequent ordination, a solemnity usually intervenes, which ought not to be passed over in silence. The Ordainer again addressing them, says, ' Beloved brethren, that you may entertain a firm hope of Divine assistance, listen to Christ, the eternal High Priest interceding for you ; who, when about to sanctify himself as a victim for the sins of the world, most fervently commended to his Father all his followers who should proclaim this redemption to the nations, &c.' Then another of the Bishops solemnly reads to them from John xvii., that last prayer of Christ, so that it is seldom heard without tears." —*Comenius.*

NOTE [19] to page 128.

" *Books of Ritual*, that is, forms for conducting the sacred ministry, called *Agenda*, are not, with us, appended to the catechetical books, so as to come into the hands of the people, but are printed separate, and given to the pastors alone ; not privately in a corner, but in the presence of the church, which rite is here described. On the

death of a pastor, these books are returned into the hands of the Seniors."—*Comenius*.

"In their sermons a certain series of subjects is gone through, which they have received from their ancestors, so that all the things of which no Christian should be ignorant, are reduced to twelve articles of the Catholic faith, the explication of which may come round in the course of a year."—*Lasilius De Ecclesiastica Disciplina, &c., Fratrum Bohemorum*, cap. 13.

NOTE [20] to page 129.

"If ever in this age the saying of Christ obtained, 'As the Father hath sent me, so send I you,' and 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,' we are assured that it obtained among us, where no one sought for the ministry, without being called; no one sought for a flock, without being sent; and no one looked for a vocation or a mission, save from those who had themselves been both called and sent. Hence, there was no congregation among us where the lord of the place, or the magistrate fixed upon the pastors; but they committed this care with confidence to the principal pastors of their souls. This was in accordance with the practice of the apostolic church; in which the suffrages for the persons to be ordained were received from the people; but their destination, when ordained, was for the consideration of the elders, *Acts* xiv. 23; *1 Tim.* ii. 3; *2 Tim.* iv. 12; *Tit.* i. 5. Hence Grotius remarks that, 'there is no appearance in the whole New Testament history of pastors having been chosen by the people.'

"This itching to choose for themselves teachers after their own tastes (*1 Tim.* iv. 3.) did indeed attempt to creep in among us, but with no good issue. For those mutual canvassings were among the causes of relaxed discipline and

neglected order. I remember an illustrious Baron, who acknowledged with sorrow his error in this respect. For he had refused to receive the appointed pastor, and importunately urged that another might be assigned for him, whose gift of eloquence he greatly admired ; but finding the man elated with self-confidence and of harsh manners, he petitioned for his removal, declaring that he would not again hesitate to acquiesce in the judgment of those to whom he had intrusted his own spiritual interests, and whose care is the common edification."—*Comenius*.

NOTE [21] to page 132.

"That the superintendents of the Unity should be chosen by the pastors alone, not by the people, or by the magistracy, need not seem strange ; for it was the practice of the primitive church. This passage of Jerome is well known : 'At Alexandria, from the time of the Evangelist Mark until the bishops Heracles and Dionysius, the presbyters always named as Bishop one whom they elected out of their own number, and placed in a higher degree.' When, in process of time, this custom was departed from, and the people obtained equal suffrages with the clergy in the election of Bishops, 'Nazianzen desired that the election might be committed solely or chiefly to the clergy, because thus less harm would come upon the Church, than if the votes of the wealthy and the powerful should prevail.'

"The question may be put, whether, although at the time of the Apostles the Church was in its birth, supported by no secular power (as was the case with the Church of the Bohemian Brethren), God did not afterwards fulfil his promises, and give kings and queens as nurses to the Church (Isa. xlix. 23) ? And is not the same right to be conceded to them over the Christian Church, as was exercised by the

Hebrew kings over their Church and its officers? Grotius, who thoroughly treats of this question, answers it in the affirmative, ‘so that the Church be not deprived of her liberty.’

“Another question is, whether pastors elected to the episcopate should be ordained by some special rite? I reply: What harm, if new labours are commended to them by a new solemnity, with invocation of the Divine name? We have an express example in apostolic men, who, when they had set apart certain of their number for a special work of the ministry (to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles), added a new ordination. *Acts xiii. 3.*”—*Comenius.*

NOTE [22] to page 136.

“Regarding the psalmody in our congregations, we may quote the testimony of the learned and pious Esrom Rüdiger: ‘I know not,’ says he, ‘if the congregations of the Bohemian Brethren do not, in this respect, surpass all others. For I do not know any who sing more, or so much of praise, thanksgiving, prayer, and doctrine; I will add also, who do it better, &c.’ The same writer, in his Preface addressed to Baron Zerotin, says: ‘You also sing all the things which are the subjects of instruction, and your hymns are like homilies,’ alluding to the Apostle’s admonition, Col. iii. 16. He continues: ‘Such songs are the voice of the congregation, which thus expresses itself in union, one and all, and in this lies the efficacy of prayer.’ For all sing, young and old, as with one mouth.”—*Comenius.*

NOTE [23] to page 141.

“The objection of Illyricus Flacius, to the rite of confirmation, that it is a repetition of baptism, is of no weight. ‘I see nothing wanting to baptism,’ says he, ‘except water.’ I answer, ‘Then you don’t see baptism,

to which water is essential, but a renewal of the covenant.' This rite we adopted for the sake of our own conscience, and to set aside the scruples excited by the Anabaptists among themselves and others. They oppose Pædobaptism, because infants thus initiated into the Church either do not know, or forget, or do not understand, that they have entered into a covenant with God; but allege that this cannot happen when, being grown up, they knowingly and willingly devote themselves to Christ. This is granted, but a remedy is applied, *the rite of confirmation*, derived from ancient times before it came to be abused, and which is still suitably observed in some churches. Then young Christians about to be admitted to the holy communion, when renewing the covenant entered into at baptism, with their own mouth renounce the flesh, the world, and Satan, and promise entire obedience to God.

"This is beautiful, and in accordance with God's command to Moses, that he should anew teach the people, who were children or infants when present at the promulgation of the law, and had no recollection of what took place, and that he should renew the covenant between God and them, when they were about to fight with their enemies, Deut. v. 29. Mention is often made of renewing the covenant with those with whom it had been entered into. Why should not this have been a type to us and our children?"—*Comenius.*

NOTE [24] to page 150.

The moderation of their views in regard to ceremonies is worthy of notice. In the "Apologia" of 1532, they say: "Whatever there is in those customs and rites, and human ceremonies, which is not opposed to the Gospel, to sacred Scripture, and to Christian charity, we observe, and with

all care we avoid giving offence in matters of this kind, but more especially lest we should, on account of them, be the occasion of any schism or disturbance; since to fight for ceremonies is no aid to piety, but rather irritates men's ill-will and multiplies their sins, and particularly so when this occurs for things indifferent."—*Apologia*, p. 103.

NOTE [25] to page 172.

The following references to the "Ratio," made by two distinguished divines of the English Church, will find a suitable place here, as showing their judgment of the ecclesiastical system therein set forth.

Bishop Hacket, in his Life of Archbishop Williams, has this passage: * "Among the poor distressed Protestants in Bohemia, many of them were braziers by occupation. These sent some messengers from them with a petition to his Majesty (James I. 1621) that they might transplant a colony into England (London especially), men, wives, and children, and their full families; signifying that they would bring with them to the value of two hundred thousand pounds in coin and materials of their trades; that their substance and labour should be subject to all customs and taxes for the king's profit. They desired to live in a body of their own nation, and to serve Christ Jesus in that church discipline which they brought with them from Bohemia. Though they had inclined his Majesty to admit them, being a great swarm of people, and bringing wax and honey along, yet the Lord Keeper" (Williams, then Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of Westminster) "diverted it, from the example of the Dutch and French that were settled among us. These brought commodious manufacture into the realm; but they brought a discipline

* Part I. p. 96.

with it, according to the allowance of their patent, which was a suffocation of the temperate crisis of our own church government: which peril of distemper would be increased by the access of the Bohemian congregation; a great fore-aste to keep our hierarchy sound from the contagion of foreigners. And he was more religious to keep the Church of England in its sabbath and holy rest, than to help out the neighbour's ox that was fallen into the pit. Yet I have somewhat to allege in behalf of the Bohemians. I have in my little library a book printed 1633 (eleven years after the Lord Keeper appeared against their petition) called 'Ratio Disciplinæ ordinisque Ecclesiastici in Unitate Fratrum Bohemorum.' Their platform in that piece comes so near the old Protestant Church of England, above all the Reformed, that, for my part, I wish we had had their company."

Our other quotation is from Dr. Maurice's "Vindication of the Primitive Church and Diocesan Episcopacy," in answer to Baxter.* "Before the Lutheran Reformation was that of the Bohemians; not that of the Calixtines only, but of the Unitas Fratrum Bohemorum, whose churches were governed by Diocesan Bishops, and whose discipline was so far from being impossible, notwithstanding the dioceses were very large, that they were perhaps the best governed churches in the world. Bucer, speaking of this government says, 'Hæc vero est cœlestis potius quam ecclesiastica in terris hierarchia.' And Calvin was so taken with this government as well as discipline, that he looks upon their governing and ordaining pastors as no inconsiderable blessing: 'Neque vero parvo est estimandum, quod tales habent Pastores a quibus regantur et ordinentur;' and these were their Bishops, as may be seen in the account they gave

* Page 373.

of themselves in ‘Ratio Discipline, &c.’ printed at Lesna, 1632, and afterwards at the Hague by Comenius, 1660. Whoever would know more of these episcopal diocesan churches may consult Lasitius, or the short account of Comenius, the then only remaining Bishop of those churches.”

The following passages are extracted from Comenius’s Treatise, “*De Bono Unitatis et Ordinis, Disciplinæque ac Obedientiæ in Ecclesiâ rectè constitutâ vel constituendâ.*”*

After adverting to the excellencies of the Church-constitution of the Brethren, he remarks, § 12, “Does any one ask, what I am seeking by commanding these things? I answer, if they are good and suitable for adoption, there is nothing invidious in desiring that they should become common property. If it is well with my own soul, I cannot but say with Paul: ‘I would to God that all were as I am, except the bonds of my affliction.’”

§ 14. “I know that it is in human nature to be pleased with what is ours, and to think little of others in comparison. The cedars value themselves on their loftiness, the oaks on their strength, the palms on their elegance, the figs and vines on their fruits; but the bramble is despised for its weakness, and is trodden down by the very beast of the field. (*Judg. ix.*) Be it so: let the Bohemian nation be the least of the nations, and the Bohemian Church the least of the churches, and the Bohemian Fraternity the least portion of the Church of its nation. What then? Is there nothing which the great may learn from the little? Listen to Christ, the Eternal Wisdom. What did he, when the great Apostles were contending about the precedence of greatness in the kingdom of heaven? He called a little child unto him, and

* This was addressed “ad Ecclesias, nominatim Anglicanam.”

set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matt. xviii. 2, 3.) Let the application be made, and you, great doctors, will be your own teachers. For I hope you all believe, that Christ is yet with us, even to the end of the world; that He sees our doings, and hears the constant disputes about superiority, and that He must needs have some little ones whom He may set in the midst of the great ones, and direct to be an example to others.”

We close with the concluding words of Comenius’s Address, in which that noble-spirited man breathes forth the earnest yearnings of his heart on behalf of the Church of the living God. That portion of the visible Church to which he had himself belonged, and whose memory he so fondly cherished, seemed destined to be obliterated, but the cause of Christ on earth was not the less dear to his heart, and he longed for the reunion in the bonds of harmony and love and order, of those who held the common faith :

“ Come, Lord Jesus! Renew us according to thy good pleasure. Restore to thy Church the bond of unity; restore the beauty of order; restore reverence for thy sceptre; restore fervour of spirit, that the kingdom of God, as in times past, may suffer violence. Or if this last age is incorrigible, remove the stage of the world, and commence that blessed reign, when there shall be unity without distraction, order without confusion, love without intermission, and God shall be all in all, for ever and ever. Amen.”

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